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## ABSTRACT

A 3.5-year study of dropout prevention programs in New York City public schools shows that current programs have been effective in increasing professional and public awareness of the dropout problem and providing needed support to some students. However, the categorical approach of most programs is inadequate, providing special services to only a limited number of students under a rigid format for a limited time. It slights the needs both of the students reached, and the vastly larger population of students in the same and other schools who are truant, or at-risk of becoming so. Moreover, the approach does not address the problem of school environments that are personally alienating and academically ineffectual, and which counteract the effects of the special programs. The programs studied are funded by the New York State Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention Program (AIDP), and the New York City Dropout Prevention Program (DPP). Project staff made observation visits to 11 middle and 9 high schools, and conducted structured interviews with students, staff, and administrators on all levels between 1985 and 1987. A comparison of the strengths and weaknesses of the various programs resulted in the recommendation that funding and program policy incorporate a systemic approach, characterized by the involvement of school staff in solving negative schoolwide conditions. A list of references and six appendices containing descriptions of the AIDP and DPP programs and schools are included. (Author/FMW)

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# EFFECTIVE DROPOUT PREVENTION

## The Case for Schoolwide Reform

A report of the  
**PUBLIC EDUCATION  
ASSOCIATION**  
by Diana Oxley, Ph.D.,  
Project Director

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# **EFFECTIVE DROPOUT PREVENTION THE CASE FOR SCHOOLWIDE REFORM**

**MAY 1988**

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Secondly, we are indebted to the students we interviewed for sharing their school experience with us.

We thank the many district, borough, and central board administrators and staff of the New York City Board of Education, staff of community-based organizations, staff of the Assembly Education Committee, and the Office of the Mayor for fulfilling our requests for information. We have endeavored to use it to produce a fair and complete report on dropout prevention programs. We hope that it serves as a constructive instrument of program improvement for policymakers and program administrators.

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Diana Oxley, Ph.D.

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## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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This report is based in general on research and observation of the schools from the inception of the State Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention initiative and in particular on a two-year research project conducted during 1985-86 and 1986-87. During the first year of the study, project staff visited eight middle and nine high schools; extensive structured interviews with the principal, program facilitator, school and CBO-based staff from all major personnel categories, and students were conducted in Winter 1985. In the second year, project staff visited three additional middle schools to increase the representativeness of the sample given the much larger number of schools involved in the dropout prevention initiative at the middle school level; and returned to four of the same high schools which had been included in the first year's sample. The interviews with staff and students were carried out in Winter and Spring 1987. The schools involved in both years' study represented a mix of AIDP and DPP programs and models at both middle and high school levels. During the second year, project staff also interviewed dropout prevention program administrators and staff located in district, borough, and central board offices in order to broaden our understanding of the implementation of central program policy.

The analysis of school-level need relied on AFDC data made available by the New York City Board of Education, Office of Student Information Services.

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## INTRODUCTION

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Thirty-six New York City high schools and 98 junior high schools have been singled out for a special assault on their seemingly intractable dropout rates. With a majority of the student population from families in poverty, the schools' profiles predict failure and indeed students drop out of these schools at a greater than average rate. To reverse this failure, in 1984 Assembly Member Jose Serrano, Chair of the New York State Assembly Education Committee, created the Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention Program at a cost of \$28 million (\$22.5 million for New York City) which the Legislature has expanded to its current \$37 million (\$30 million for New York City). In 1985, New York City Mayor Edward I. Koch added \$10 million (continued to date) for an additional effort known as the Dropout Prevention Program. Together these programs present a dropout prevention effort of unprecedented scope in New York City.

In the three-and-one-half years that the Public Education Association (PEA) has studied these dropout prevention initiatives and interacted with legislative, municipal, and education officials, we have documented policymakers' willingness to confront the reasons why students leave school and what needs to change to enable students to stay in school. However, we have found shortcomings in funding availability and allocation, program scope, and implementation. The New York City Board of Education, which is responsible for developing program guidelines and administration for both the state and city initiated programs, has been responsive to PEA's recommendations aimed at strengthening dropout prevention efforts, yet the implementation of these recommendations has not been without flaws.

Originally in 1984, for instance, funding was spread thinly over all schools — even if schools did not exhibit a grave dropout problem they received funding. A response to PEA concerns, implemented in the 1985-86 school year, targeted a limited number of schools and students within schools for intensive support. However, this corrective action brought with it a standardized program format insensitive to local conditions and the differing needs of targeted students. Similarly, PEA's recommendation to strengthen academics was implemented through self-contained classes which tended to label and isolate students. Indeed, PEA's persistent highlighting of implementation difficulties, as well as public demands for accountability, typically were translated into overly prescriptive guidelines and circumscription of programs. As a result, most dropout prevention efforts in New York City have been too limited to meet individual or citywide needs.

The findings and policy recommendations contained in this report are the product of PEA's several years' experience with dropout prevention initiatives and specifically draw upon our 1985-87 study of how the schools responded to the mandate to increase attendance and stem the dropout rate.

PEA's overall finding is that the current dropout prevention efforts have been effective in increasing professional and public awareness of the dropout problem and providing needed support to some students. However, the current approach of most programs is inadequate, providing special services to only a limited number of students under a rigid format for a limited time. It slights the needs both of the students reached and the vastly larger population of students in the same and other schools who are truant or at-risk of becoming so. Moreover, the approach does not address the problem of school

environments that are personally alienating and academically ineffectual and which countermand the effect of special supports.

PEA has therefore concluded that dropout prevention funding and policy must integrate the provision of social supports with bottom-up school reform strategies that address the endemic problems of the school. This approach, which we have called "systemic", allows the schools to institute reforms intended to benefit the school as a whole and, using the needs of the individual school as the guide, reorder the institution to help solve the educational problems students present. Under the systemic approach, staff is challenged to take on the school's standard operating procedures and negative schoolwide conditions, e.g., by reorganizing the school day with a P.M. School or placing students in small clusters to reduce anonymity. We found the potential of this systemic approach to have been validated in a number of the dropout prevention efforts which used an enriching mix of targeted attendance outreach and monitoring and more sweeping program reforms for an integrated, comprehensive, and collegially planned program. We are recommending that this approach be extended immediately to more of the schools currently with only the AIDP Program and ultimately to all the schools in the system.

In the report that follows, Chapters One and Two compare the various models of dropout prevention programs, the extent to which they meet current needs, and their administration. Chapters Three, Four, and Five examine program dimensions of particular interest: attendance, job programs, and parent involvement. Recommendations for immediate action follow each chapter.

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## CHAPTER ONE

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# STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF CURRENT DROPOUT PREVENTION PROGRAMS

## OVERVIEW

The New York City Board of Education's predominant strategy for reducing the city's high rate of student attrition was to create programs which we have termed for convenience "categorical." Collectively these programs are state funded, administered centrally from the chancellor's office and are called Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention (AIDP); 124 of the 134 middle and high schools in the state funded dropout prevention initiative implemented such programs. Eligible schools were those, with some exceptions, whose attendance rates were below the city median. The programs served on the average 100 to 150 students per school who met set criteria.

Middle school dropout prevention programs were set up in 98 schools or 55% of the 179 middle schools in the city. The number of students targeted in these schools was 14,700; this number represents 14% of the 106,000 students enrolled in these 98 schools and 8% of the total middle school population of 183,600.

In these schools, dropout prevention originally provided augmented support services such as counseling and attendance monitoring and after school enrichment activities. No more than 150 students in the upper two grades (7th to 8th or 8th to 9th depending on the school) could be targeted for services. In the current year, middle school programs have been redesigned to provide an alternative academic component patterned after high school programs already in operation.

High school dropout prevention programs were implemented in 36 or 32% of the 110 city high schools. Targeted high school students totaled 10,200; they constituted 10% of the 104,700 students enrolled in these schools and 4% of the city's total high school enrollment of 262,000.

Across high schools, the size of the program varied according to funding source. In state funded programs, target groups of 150 students (with some exceptions) in the ninth and tenth grades received support services and, in addition, were placed in a specially designed academic program.

In ten high schools which participated in a joint Board of Education/ city-sponsored "laboratory" program, schoolwide or "systemic" improvements were pursued in addition to the provision of special services to targeted individuals. Each of these Dropout Prevention Programs (DPP) directed support services to target groups whose number corresponded to the number of students who drop out in a year

in each school. The number ranged from 177 to 798. These programs also included reforms which were intended to benefit the school as a whole, although most of these systemic reforms were instituted at the first two grade levels. These schools had much larger budgets to support their expanded agenda. The participating schools were selected from among those with the poorest records of attendance and achievement in the city.

It is extremely important to understand the limitations as well as strengths of a systemic approach — just as it is important to recognize the bounds of categorical programs. A cautious appraisal of systemic intervention and a similar look at categorical programs will help to establish realistic expectations for school progress and to avoid unfair penalization of schools for failing to achieve goals which are not commensurate with the schools' capacity.

## SYSTEMIC AND CATEGORICAL PROGRAMS COMPARED

### CATEGORICAL PROGRAMS IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOLS

At the middle school level, state and city funded programs function under the same guidelines. They are categorical programs available to 150 students per school. The criteria most frequently applied stipulated a range of absences above or below which students were deemed ineligible. Emphasis is placed on counseling, attendance monitoring, after school enrichment activities, and an alternative academic component. A part time guidance counselor or less expensive full time SAPIS worker (Substance Abuse Prevention Intervention Services) was assigned to the program. Counselors monitored student progress, met with families when necessary, and were responsible for organizing activities for parents to increase their support of program efforts. Two full time paraprofessionals or the equivalent part time attendance teacher and full time paraprofessional were allocated to carry out attendance monitoring and outreach.

The academic component was confined to two periods a week of in-class instruction in career education and an after school program. Due to teachers' widespread dissatisfaction with the career education curriculum and the fact that students were removed from their regular classes to receive instruction, these classes were eliminated in the 1987-88 year.

The after school program could take one of two forms: extended-day classes encompassing tutoring in core courses and recreational activities or career education which included in-school business enterprises and paid work experience. Program guidelines specified that activities were to be organized in two-hour sessions for 2 to 3 days a week. Up to five teachers, each working with 15 students could be hired; generally far fewer teachers were actually employed, however. Consequently, only a fraction of targeted students participated in the after school program, and attendance by these students was often quite poor. In the current 1987-88 year, a school day academic program supported with funding from other sources has been added.

## **Funding**

Sixty-nine of the 98 middle school dropout prevention programs were funded through AIDP; the remaining 29 were supported by city DPP funding. Both AIDP and DPP programs received the same amount, \$150,000 per school program. Despite the difference in funding source, both AIDP and DPP programs followed the same general model, with one exception: CBO staff were used to provide certain services in several AIDP schools and to operate entire programs in 14 of the 29 schools. Roughly equal numbers of the DPP schools were designated for CBO programs and for school-based programs to permit a comparison of their relative effectiveness. In schools with CBO programs, the CBO received \$100,000 and the school received \$50,000 to carry out supplementary activities.

## **CATEGORICAL PROGRAMS IN THE HIGH SCHOOLS**

Categorical high school programs followed one of three models: a blocked academic program with intensified support services called SOAR; a locally adapted version of SOAR called Strategies; and a case management-vocational preparation program, called Operation Success, operated by a community organization.

### **SOAR**

Sixteen high schools established a mini-school called Student Opportunity For Advancement and Retention (SOAR). The programs existed prior to the dropout prevention initiative, but served a different target group. Consequently, in schools where SOAR already operated, staff were forced to begin targeting students who met the dropout prevention program criteria. SOAR is an alternative academic program designed to provide special supports to students having difficulty making academic progress. Schools are required to block four groups of 25 students each into four classes. Three of these must be major academic subjects, including English and math, and a fourth is occupational education. In addition, a fifth class period is programmed for a tutorial. An additional 50 students, who participated in the program the previous year but whose improved performance makes them no longer eligible, are offered a transitional program consisting of two academic classes of the kind described above.

One guidance counselor and as a rule, two paraprofessionals are assigned to the program. The ratio of 150 students to one counselor represents a sharp improvement over ratios of 400 and 500 students to one guidance counselor found in these schools. Counselors meet with students individually and also organize middle/high school linkage activities in order to ease middle school students' transition to high school. The paraprofessional staff monitor student attendance and make home visits to follow up on student absences. Finally, students are screened and referred for health services.

Despite the reduction in class size from 34 to 25, and the fact that students remained with the same group of peers throughout the day, student attendance was poor; 10 or fewer might attend on a given day. Further, students made little use of the tutoring sessions.

### Strategies

The strategies model, in place in seven schools, utilized blocked programming, attendance monitoring and outreach in the same manner as SOAR. The main difference between the programs lay in the Strategies' schools flexibility in developing alternative approaches. The schools opted for the inclusion of career education and work experience. Community organizations provided these services in some cases; they offered career education, counseling and, sometimes, internships at such sites as hospitals. In other schools, teachers carried out these activities. One of the most instrumentally creative attempts to link school to work was in one school's communications center in which students attended communication arts and keyboarding classes and operated video equipment. The career education and work experience programs afforded students alternative, non-traditional, high interest educational programs, a goal shared by all AIDP high school programs.

### Operation Success

The Operation Success program was operated by a large social service agency in three schools. It combined case management services, i.e., counseling, attendance monitoring, and outreach, with career education, which included counseling, skills training, and internships. Operation Success career education is described in greater detail in Chapter Four.

### Funding

SOAR and Strategies were allocated on average \$200,000 per school. The actual figures ranged from \$78,933 to \$228,457, depending on school size. Operation Success was allocated on average \$350,000 per school for the programs it operated, with a range from \$346,000 to \$511,000.

## CURRENT SYSTEMIC CHANGE EFFORTS

Like the categorical programs, the systemic dropout prevention programs provided a core of attendance improvement services to absentees; students received special attention from attendance outreach and counseling personnel. In addition, systemic programs were expected in greater or lesser degree to build schoolwide improvements around this core of support services and, drawing from a repertoire of validated program initiatives, direct the special services at non-targeted students as well. These initiatives included class size reduction, the creation of P.M. Schools and after school activities, the development of academic clusters (a house plan), part time job placement, and full time jobs for graduating seniors.

Schoolwide improvements added to the strength of add-ons for at-risk students by enriching the entire school environment to which these students were exposed: they also gave teachers hope that they were turning the school around, improving overall school climate, and able to attract high as well as low achieving students. Thus, their reach far exceeded that of categorical programs, although by exactly how much and with what significance to student performance is not fully determinable.

The ten high schools in the Dropout Prevention program were assigned to different intervention models. The models differed in the degree of their emphasis on systemic reform versus case management, i.e., the development of comprehensive support plans for individual students. Case management encompassed a range of student supports, predominantly attendance outreach and counseling and in some cases, job training and placement. Community-based organizations (CBOs) were hired to carry out case management in every school. Systemic improvements were those regarded as beneficial to the school at large; they were not targeted at particular individuals, but were aimed chiefly at the ninth and tenth grade levels since those are the points at which the greatest proportions of students drop out. All schools undertook both types of activities, but schools with a systemic emphasis had a much larger budget with which to make systemic improvements, while schools oriented to case management had little funding for systemic purposes.

Schools selected the particular school improvement strategies they wanted to use from a menu of items generated by the Assistant Superintendent for Dropout Prevention in conjunction with the principals of the DPP schools. The strategies that were adopted included class size reduction, a conflict resolution program, extracurricular activities, a P.M. School, the creation of academic clusters or houses, a part time jobs program, tutoring, and course enrichment.

### **Funding**

The schools' level of program funding was determined on the basis of their dropout rates. Each school was allocated \$1000 x the average number of its students who had dropped out in each of the previous three years; in addition every school received \$150,000 in baseline funds. Schools' budgets ranged from \$337,000 to \$948,000. As a consequence of the funding formula, the larger DPP high schools had much larger budgets with which to mount dropout prevention efforts and were allowed to undertake extensive schoolwide improvements. The amount spent on systemic improvements in these schools ranged from \$377,000 to \$641,000. The smaller allocations for the smaller high schools, on the other hand, limited their effort to the case management model. Most of their budgets went to a community-based organization (CBO) to perform case management services. Only the baseline allotment of \$150,000 was allowed for bettering the school itself.

In order to give a better sense of the kind of systemic change the dropout prevention program stimulated, two schools' programs are described in some detail below; they were chosen to reflect the range in magnitude of systemic change attempted by the laboratory schools.

### **SCHOOL A: A MOSTLY SYSTEMIC MODEL**

#### **School Conditions**

School A undertook the most dramatic schoolwide reforms of any of the schools; its high dropout rate and large size defined one of the largest at-risk populations (644 students) and budgets, nearly \$800,000. The principal and program staff crafted a very ambitious program whose goal was nothing less than to turn the school into one which could attract even the best students. The school seemed to have many of the ingredients for accomplishing this goal besides the necessary financial support. The principal was widely respected, several strong faculty members joined the program staff, and the

school is located in a neighborhood which is beginning to show some resurgence in economic strength. Perhaps because of these attributes, staff seemed not only enthusiastic about the program, but highly confident about its eventual success.

School A's need for systemic change was clearly evident. Its dropout rate was the highest in the city; nearly every student came from a poor black or Hispanic family. Neighboring businesses and institutions would like to have seen the school close; many were unresponsive to the school's efforts to engage their support.

Because the school is also overutilized, appropriate office space for faculty is scarce. A small room was found for the staff of the dropout prevention program and was used by the program facilitator, secretary, attendance outreach personnel, a volunteer, and a faculty member who was not part of the program. The supervisor of the community organization hired to do case management was also assigned this space until a second room was found to accommodate her and her staff when they came on board late in the school year. The office was dominated by a cacophony of voices and the sound of the copy machine as staff attempted to carry out their various activities.

### **Program**

The program's centerpiece is an academic cluster plan which organizes all ninth and tenth graders into ten different academic clusters. The clusters reflect differing academic themes, levels of ability, and purpose. Although they are eventually intended to encompass a variety of student interests and options and to replace the traditional, academic discipline-based system, at this point in time most of the clusters are long-standing educational programs such as bilingual and special education, college bound, and Prep (a program for overage, underprepared ninth grade students). Exceptions are a business and transitional program. The transitional cluster was created as a mechanism for reintroducing returning truants to an appropriate mainstream cluster. Students are placed in a blocked program that consists of small classroom instruction in a core set of courses and life skills, a class specially designed to help truants cope better in school. Students remain in the cluster for a term — or longer if they are not ready to return to another cluster.

The cluster plan is slowly evolving. Staff are currently working towards adding two clusters and extending the plan through the upper grades. In this way students will have a greater opportunity to find a cluster which engages their interests and provides coherence in terms of teachers, peers, and academic thrust throughout their high school years.

Another systemic improvement the school has made is the creation of a school in the late afternoon hours during which the school is normally closed. The P.M. School is treated as one of the academic clusters in which students can participate, but unlike the other clusters operates to supplement students' coursework in another cluster. The late afternoon classes offer students who have difficulty attending morning classes the opportunity to attend more regularly, to make up failed courses, or to enrich their regular core of classes with special ones. Some 20 courses are offered, mostly of a remedial nature.

In addition to the P.M. School, program staff have arranged for several clubs to meet during the 3 to 5 p.m. time period. Clubs include body-building, music and dance, computer, drama, chess, and cheerleading activities. Before the dropout prevention program was implemented, the school offered no extracurricular activities.

Finally, one teacher works as a part time job developer helping to place graduating seniors seeking full time employment in jobs. The jobs for seniors program was added across all ten high schools during the second year. In-school part time jobs which pay minimum wage are also available to younger students.

Beyond these improvements which begin to reshape the school's fundamental approach to students, the staff of a community organization provide counseling and attendance outreach services to students with histories of poor attendance. These students and some of their families receive individual support to improve the students' capacity to negotiate the contours of school life and to take advantage of increased opportunities now available.

### **SCHOOL B: A MOSTLY CASE MANAGEMENT MODEL**

#### **School Conditions**

School B was allocated just over \$500,000 in program funds. Its smaller size resulted in a smaller absolute number of students (338) who were at risk according to the Board of Education formula and dictated its assignment to a case management model. Nevertheless, the true extent of School B's need is closer to that of School A than their budgets would indicate. More than half of the ninth grade class, 800 students, are holdovers from the previous year. Average daily attendance was less than 70%, among the worst attendance rates in the city. The principal views all of the students as at-risk. Many of them are new immigrants who present special difficulties in terms of their language and patterns of attendance and mobility. The school building is seriously overutilized; finding space to accommodate new activities was a major hurdle.

The principal was unhappy not to have been given funds for schoolwide improvements, although he did benefit from the professional planning activities in which all the laboratory school staffs participated. He consoled himself with the view that he would be better off than more richly funded schools in the event that funds were cut off because he would be less dependent on that supplemental funding and could recover more easily.

This view reflects an issue which is important to understand in the context of dropout prevention efforts. It reveals the reality of implementing new programs in New York City schools: school administrators have to cope with a great deal of unpredictability in the programs and resources they will be allowed to use from one year to the next. Consequently, staff are skeptical of new programs and somewhat unwilling to embrace them. In the case of the dropout prevention initiative, administrators were told from the start that it was a three-year program, subject to termination at the end of three years. The impact of this knowledge on schools' commitment to the program cannot be underestimated.

## **Program**

A major component of School B's program was a transitional academic program similar to that at School A. Students with histories of truancy and/or academic failure, but not necessarily meeting the Board of Education stipulated criteria, were placed in a blocked academic program and rotated into the mainstream after the conclusion of each term. Only 60 students could be accommodated, however. In addition, the school hired a second community organization to operate a conflict resolution program which trains students to mediate conflicts that arise between other students in the school. The program helps students develop leadership and social skills as well as preventing altercations from escalating into more serious ones. Again, the program's scope is small; it trains only about 15-20 students from year to year. A program designed to help Haitian students and their families adapt to school was also instituted. Activities including guidance counseling and orientation assemblies were offered during the late afternoon two days a week. Finally, the jobs for seniors and part time in-school job programs described above were implemented.

## **THE UNIVERSE OF NEED**

With the exception of the ten high schools participating in the "laboratory" experiment, the programs described above all suffer from the same limitations in number of students affected and impact on the larger student body. It is clear that the number of students who are currently receiving dropout prevention supports is small when compared to gross enrollment numbers, whether they refer to the registers of all middle and high schools or of participating schools only. But when the schools in which these programs reside are themselves examined closely, the extent to which this dropout prevention initiative fails to meet student need is even clearer. While no needs assessment data are available to illustrate this situation directly, it is possible to utilize existing data to provide some indication of the potential need for such services.

In our view the most suitable data for this purpose are the estimated numbers of children receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) payments who attend city schools. (These estimates are used by the Board of Education to help determine schools' eligibility for federal Chapter I funding). AFDC is based upon poverty status and family status, namely, whether the head of the household is a single female parent. Both of these measures have been shown to be powerful predictors of student attrition in New York (New York State Education Department, 1987) and nationally (e.g., Steinberg, Blinde & Chan, 1984). We have used the 1985 estimates of AFDC recipients attending middle and high school to identify the universe of need. The city schools' attendance and dropout rates are also relevant, but due to the unreliable manner in which these statistics are calculated (Office of the Special Deputy Comptroller for the City of New York, June, 1987), we refer to them very cautiously here.

## **High Schools**

The estimated percentage of AFDC-eligible students in high schools with dropout prevention programs varied greatly, from a low of 31% to 238%. The latter figure, showing more than two-and-one-half times the school's register, arises because the figures are based on eligible children in the community. Many of these are not actually attending school; they have dropped out or are not

attending for other reasons. For the nine participating high schools that had had AFDC estimates in excess of 100%, 100% was the rate used to calculate the number of students in need. Most high schools with programs had an estimated AFDC student body of approximately 50%; only six had percentages of poor students under 50%.

Of the total number of students (104,700) registered at the 36 participating schools, 67% or about 70,100, were estimated to be AFDC students. In other words, the overwhelming majority of students in these schools can be said to be at risk of dropping out — while only a small fraction (10%) have been targeted for dropout prevention services.

#### **Additional High Schools In Need**

While the universe of need as indicated by poverty and academic performance is concentrated in the 36 high schools selected for participation in the dropout prevention program, it is not exhausted by them. Seventeen additional high schools have percentages of AFDC students commensurate with those of the participating schools and do not meet state standards for academic performance. (The percentage of AFDC students at these schools ranged from 35% to 99%). As in the case of the dropout prevention schools, most of these 17 schools have AFDC student populations which constitute a majority of the student body.

In summary, a total of 53 high schools exhibit a level of need which in our view warrants special intervention. These 53 schools represent less than one-half of all high schools in the city, yet contain more than two-thirds (68%) of all poor students. All of them have been designated as schools in need of comprehensive school improvement plans (CSIP) based on state assessments.

#### **Middle Schools**

To determine the universe of need at the middle school level, the same methodology was employed. Of the approximately 106,000 students registered at the 98 participating schools, 55%, or about 58,000 were estimated to be AFDC students. The AFDC student population at these schools represented 75% of the total number of AFDC students attending the city's 179 middle schools (77,000). The range of percentages of AFDC students at these schools was extreme, from a low of 13% to a high of 161%. The presence of a small number of schools with low percentages of AFDC students among participating schools reflected the policy of selecting middle schools for dropout prevention programs if they were feeders to high schools with programs; ordinarily the feeders to participating high schools had student characteristics similar to those of the students of receiver schools, but not in every case. Eight middle schools had AFDC estimates in excess of 100%. Over two-thirds of the participating schools (69) had AFDC student population of over 50%. Over three-quarters of the schools (74) exhibited sub-standard academic performance and were designated CSIP schools.

#### **Additional Middle Schools in Need**

In addition to the 98 dropout prevention middle schools, we identified ten other middle schools which met our AFDC population benchmark and CSIP eligibility standards. The percentage of AFDC students ranged from 36% to 112%. Seven of the schools had AFDC student populations of 50% or more. Of the total number of students attending the schools (7,000), 59% or about 4,600 were

estimated to be AFDC students, approximately the same percentage as found in the dropout prevention schools.

## THE LARGER CONTEXT OF SCHOOLS' PROBLEMS

### Demographics

An additional indicator of need for dropout prevention initiatives is racial isolation. Race and minority group status are not predictors of low achievement, but racial isolation is normally associated with poverty in the city and together these factors do predict low school achievement and poor attendance. While all of the city's schools have minorities in their populations, some high schools have much higher concentrations of black and Hispanic students than other city schools. Twenty-nine of the high schools with dropout prevention programs had percentages of blacks and Hispanics higher than the city average of nearly 80%. Of the additional 17 needy high schools which do not have dropout prevention programs, fourteen had percentages of black and Hispanics above the city average. On the middle school level, almost all schools (88) had black and Hispanic concentrations of 80% or more, while eight of the ten middle schools which do not have programs but indicate the need, had minority populations at or above the city average.

The dense concentration of poor minority students in DPP and AIDP high schools reflects to a large extent the Board's high school admissions policy and the demographic, residential, and economic conditions which prevailed in the 1970's. Between 1970 and 1980, the percent of the city's population below poverty level increased from 14.8% to 20.0% (Nathan, 1986). As of 1980, 82.6% of the black and Hispanic poor were living in poverty areas (census tracts with 20% or more in poverty) as opposed to 31.8% of white poor. The 848,671 black and Hispanic poor living in these areas represented more than 12% of the city's total population. Recent demographic, residential, and economic dynamics have not altered the structural conditions which sustain the racial isolation of black and Hispanics in poverty areas.

In theory, the established system for assigning students to high schools has permitted students either to elect attending the high school assigned to their neighborhood (called "zoned" schools) or to apply to a large range of optional schools or programs (about 250), many of which screen students and are therefore competitive. However, because of the severe competition for admission to educational option programs and schools, many students are "screened out" and end up at their zoned high schools. Criticism of this process resulted in modification in the admission procedures for these programs and schools. As of last fall, half of the available spaces for the "education options" schools were assigned by lottery instead of allowing the schools to handpick the entire entering class. In spite of this change, some 30,000 of the 90,000 students applying to high school were neither selected by lottery nor accepted through the screening process and were placed as a result in their zoned schools.

Also ending up at their zoned schools were those students who "chose" to go there. For some students it is a question of informed choice, but for others it is choice born of circumstance—peer pressure, proximity, feeder patterns, student, parental and/or school indifference, and, more generally, neighborhood and socio-economic status.

## **Age**

Another factor in the population mix at the zoned high school is the number of students who reach there older than the traditional age. Both nationally and locally, being overage for one's grade is one of the most important predictors of dropping out of school. While not every overage student in the city drops out, nearly every dropout is overage (Office of Educational Assessment, 1986). Citywide, 14, 151 students who attend middle school are older than 14, having been held over in fourth or seventh grades. By the time they reach high school they are not only behind in skills, but because they have less time to complete high school credits, they are more dropout prone. (See Chapter Four and Appendix A for further discussion of overage).

## **Functional Problems of Schools**

Finally, to appreciate the extent of the need for dropout prevention, it should be emphasized that all city schools and particularly those schools with dropout prevention programs tend to be large, overcrowded, and fragmented by a plethora of unintegrated programs. PEA's first year report (Foley and Oxley, 1986) describe some of the negative conditions that beset schools with high dropout rates. Students experience discontinuous or inconsistent treatment across programs and have little sense of a cohesive social environment; the school climate is anonymous and emotionally demanding, the antithesis of a supportive environment needed by all adolescents and particularly those most at risk. Staff are unsure of the school's overriding purpose and direction and are cynical about the system's ever changing priorities; they enjoy little discretion in using the resources categorical programs make available. In this regard, the addition of dropout prevention programs places additional stress on already overburdened schools.

# **THE NEED FOR SYSTEMIC REFORM**

The numbers of students in need and the past three years' observation of a system grappling with a huge dropout problem have led to an inexorable conclusion. Nothing short of reconceiving New York City high schools so they are entirely geared to the educational problems presented by the students will do the job.

The compelling numbers cited above do not afford educators the leisure to wait until socio-economic conditions improve and although there is movement towards ameliorating some consequences of high school admissions policy, progress is slow. When majorities of students are at risk of dropping out of school and clear signs of school-level failure are manifest, triage seems a wholly inadequate response — incapable of reducing the dropout rate by a substantial amount. Were it affordable, however, the expansion of existing categorical programs to include all students who are dropout prone provides no solution. In many cases, the majority of students would be placed in this "special program."

Moreover, an overview of the negative consequences of categorical programming strengthens the case for an alternative that attacks the inadequacies of the system's response to its student clients.

Among the most limiting factors is the criteria stipulating a range of absences above or below which students are deemed ineligible. This results in neglect of incipient truants, long-term absentees, and

students exhibiting other problems that might put them at risk of dropping out, such as family or personal crises. This artificial cut off does not recognize the numbers of students with such problems in the schools.

The targeted nature of these programs insures that the neediest students are served, but limits the schools' flexibility to integrate existing support programs or services with new dropout prevention activities, and students experiencing problems with those who are not. Thus dropout prevention programs have increased redundancy in educational offerings and have unnecessarily isolated marginal students from peers who could provide assistance and positive role models.

Furthermore, the add-on dropout prevention programs bring back students whose need for space and staff attention remains even after they are returned to the mainstream; consequently, the school's capacity to accommodate all students is further strained. Either the returnees or the school as a whole are shortchanged by the programs intended to help. Administrators were markedly dissatisfied with the add-on programs at both middle and high school levels and with the case management model. Much of that dissatisfaction can be attributed to this built-in disincentive. In contrast, staff of systemic programs were much more enthusiastic about their mission; they believed the program might lift the school and, perhaps, themselves out of a sorry state.

Additionally, categorical programming limits the range of interventions and options for a dropout-prone student body which requires more than a single intervention model. Different students will respond to different measures, including transitional support and long term placement, remedial and work experience, out-of-school referral, evening school, and extracurricular opportunities among others. In order for the city's poor performing schools to maximize their overall success rate, they need to institute a variety of features geared to the diverse characteristics of their students.

Finally, and perhaps most telling, simply adding new categorical programs to accommodate the needs of some students, does nothing to eliminate current features which detract from effective organizational functioning of schools and which make it difficult for all students and especially marginal students to cope. Categorical programming does not address the school climate or hospitality to at-risk students. Thus, the unaddressed issues in the school are constantly working against their effectiveness.

It is notable that among the most successful systemic improvements made by schools are those geared to increasing the school's overall flexibility in solving the educational problems students present. Most importantly, the systemic approach allows staff to take on the school's standard operating procedures (e.g., the 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. schedule) and negative schoolwide conditions (e.g., student anonymity) which so clearly doom supplemental dropout prevention programs to failure.

Clearly, the requirements for effective dropout prevention, as well as the magnitude of the dropout problem, entail a radical reshaping of the existing organization of the schools currently participating in the dropout prevention initiative. For these schools, both increased resources and increased flexibility in the use of these resources are needed to effect a desirable level of change.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR SYSTEMIC DROPOUT PREVENTION STRATEGY

### **Funding**

As we have seen, a systemic approach to dropout prevention has been pursued in only ten of the 134 schools involved in the dropout prevention initiative; and the degree of systemic change which has occurred in these ten schools varies widely. We have also seen that it is quite expensive to implement such programs. On the average \$570,000 was allocated for each of the ten high schools. In order to spend an equal amount in the remaining 26 high schools with categorical dropout prevention programs, nearly \$10,000,000 more would be needed. (This would be built upon the school's existing AIDP funds). Moreover, as noted, the smaller of the ten high schools themselves lack sufficient funds for a systemic approach. At the middle school level where approximately \$15,000,000 has been allocated across 98 schools, and where school size and level of need are somewhat smaller, the amount would need to be doubled, perhaps, to drive systemic efforts proportionate to those at the high school level.

Although the application of a more equitable high school funding formula channeled additional dollars to dropout prevention schools, it does not diminish the need for increments in dropout prevention funding in the high schools. The new tax levy monies (\$5 million in academic year 1987-88 have been targeted to support the implementation of a High Schools Division mandated plan to organize in every high school all ninth grades into "houses". The house plan was instituted in one of the laboratory schools as part of its systemic dropout prevention program and experience suggests that it is a particularly appropriate strategy. However, it is questionable whether the \$5 million is enough or is being appropriately used for this purpose. Moreover, other worthwhile components of a whole school approach such as an extended school day for extracurricular activities, and a P.M. School have no funding source, and the resources for attendance and counseling services are sharply limited. Fifteen of the 36 high schools have received no funding for collaborations with community organizations either for the purpose of doing case management or job development.

Chapter I (federal) funding can be used for systemic reform but only in schools where 75% or more of students are in poverty. In such cases, they may be used to design a schoolwide approach to reducing students' achievement deficits. Unfortunately, however, schools which do not meet that rather extreme standard are unable to use Chapter I funds except for categorical programs. Most AIDP and DPP schools have over 50% needy populations, but few have as large as 75%; only nine participating high schools had an excess of 100% in poverty. Consequently the use of these funds to develop systemic strategies is limited. Moreover, targeting of these funds also prevents their use for effective strategies which integrate non-Chapter I students with eligible students. Cooperative learning which involves mixed-ability student teams is one example of an effective approach unavailable through Chapter I. (Slavin, 1987).

### **Information and Commitment to Systemic Approach**

One of the barriers to developing a dropout prevention policy that incorporates a systemic approach is that there is a near-vacuum of information about it. Most of the literature fails to consider the

relevance of school context to dropout prevention efforts and presents idealized models which are undifferentiated with respect to the appropriateness of their application to particular school settings. The most solid of these models describe circumscribed programs that serve a restricted group of dropout-prone students and have many of the same weaknesses as the current New York City categorical dropout prevention programs (Wehlage, 1983). The schoolwide focus of the "effective schools" movement offers some guidance. However this literature is limited in certain crucial effects. It mostly concerns elementary schools but gives little guidance to secondary schools. Moreover, it does not explicitly address the special requirements of inner city schools which serve large numbers of at-risk students.

Nevertheless, the need to pursue more comprehensive approaches to dropout prevention for these kinds of schools is echoed in other large, urban school systems with high dropout rates (Chicago Panel on Public School Policy and Finance, 1986) and must be given more credence in New York City. A heartening sign that the systemic approach is being considered seriously, at least at the state level, is found in the New York State Board of Regents' recently released working paper on increasing high school completion rates. (New York State Education Department, 1987). It is significant that the authors have eschewed use of the term dropout prevention. Dropout prevention has the unfortunate connotation of programs for marginal students (the categorical strategy), whereas efforts to increase graduation rates seem to refer to a broader range of school policies and reform measures. Indeed, this paper offers a set of school-based efforts to improve students' chances of graduating which link targeted strategies, such as identification of at-risk students and outreach to out-of-school youth, with systemic interventions, such as implementing effective school characteristics.

Significantly, the Board of Regents' paper recognizes the link between schools' responsibility for student failure (as well as success) and adequate resources. The latter is key to the success of a systemic dropout prevention strategy.

### **DROPOUT PREVENTION AS COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING**

Nearly every school that was designated for a dropout prevention program was also required to implement a comprehensive school improvement plan (CSIP). In most of the laboratory schools, staff considered their dropout prevention programs as synonymous with CSIP. Consequently, these schools had a leg up on the other schools in that they had already implemented schoolwide reforms designed to improve the school's overall performance. Indeed, in these schools the dropout prevention strategy of choice amounted to comprehensive school improvement. That is, dropout prevention programs offered schoolwide academic programs which are appropriate for at-risk students in the context of a more supportive school environment. Schools which are required to improve academic performance through comprehensive school improvement efforts must not do so at the expense of increasing already high dropout rates but with sensitivity to the need to support students' progress toward graduation. In short, each of these reform initiatives is strengthened by reconceptualizing dropout prevention and comprehensive school improvement as one and the same.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **THE NUMBER OF AT-RISK STUDENTS**

The perspective that dropout prevention programs are needed for only a small group of students attending New York City middle and high schools must be revised to reflect the true extent of need. Dropout prevention strategies must be designed to reach many students by coordinating existing services with a restructuring of the school environment, organization, and academic efforts.

### **CATEGORICAL PROGRAMMING**

Categorical dropout prevention funds should be targeted on schools rather than students.

Consideration in targeting should be the degree of need in the school.

Program goals should be to develop comprehensive programs that target the neediest students, some other marginal students, and the school as a whole.

Guidelines should encourage pooling of monies with other funds for dropout prevention and school reform to permit comprehensiveness and avoid program overlap or duplication.

Guidelines should permit the use of funds for programs that integrate students from within and without dropout-prone groups when educationally appropriate.

### **THE SYSTEMIC APPROACH**

All schools with acute dropout problems should be enabled to pursue a schoolwide approach to dropout prevention, combining targeted services with initiatives that affect the climate and program of the school as a whole. This will require increased funding, technical assistance, and encouragement of school-based planning responsive to local needs.

### **COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING**

School dropout prevention teams and the CSIP committee should combine their work efforts. The systemic approach should be the model for both.

## **FUNDING**

In order to support comprehensive dropout prevention programs that permit systemic change, schools should receive a base level of funding for ongoing school-based planning and an additional amount — based on the number of needy students as determined by the poverty level rather than attendance records — to implement attendance services and other reforms on a schoolwide basis.

## **SCHOOL SIZE**

New schools, and in particular high schools (which have historically been conceived as large buildings) should be much smaller. None should be larger than 1,500; some should be built for no more than 500 students. Experiments with reorganizing existing high schools into smaller units must be pursued and evaluated for their impact on school climate, academic program, integration, and dropout prevention. The Board of Education should also reexamine the formulas for school capacity and utilization rates.

## **SCHOOL OVERCROWDING**

The Board of Education should give priority to developing solutions to school overcrowding, convening a broadly based task force which will take into consideration the high school admissions process, the zoning and integration policies, as well as other factors that may affect school utilization.

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## CHAPTER TWO

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### THE NEED FOR LOCAL PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Any kind of systemwide initiative raises or should raise a host of questions about the process by which central administration and building staff can best collaborate to achieve their goals. Unfortunately, the history of educational reform is a repetitious account of failed implementation as a consequence of disregarding this process.

The citywide dropout prevention programs provide few exceptions. In the main, citywide drop-out programs have been characterized by a top-down management style. The literature on implementation of educational programs shows that successful implementation strategies are sensitive to local conditions, including neighborhood, staff, and student characteristics; and engage the know-how and energies of school staff (e.g., House & Mathison, 1983). In short, school administrators and staff must be fully involved in all stages of program development. At the same time, central administrators are needed to establish priorities and to support local efforts with technical expertise and financial resources.

The Board of Education has moved increasingly toward central mandates and highly prescriptive programs. Consequently, it has been preoccupied with policing schools' adherence to these prescriptions since school staff's commitment to such programs is inevitably weak. Increasingly, and, predictably, without demonstrable successes, the Board has bypassed borough high school and district middle school offices in its haste to tighten the reins of leadership in response to public pressure to effect system-wide improvements.

One notable exception to the near-rule of bureaucratic management can be found in the the city funded high school dropout prevention program. It is important to affirm it. We highlight the successes of the management of this program below and contrast it with less effective program administrations.

### OVERVIEW OF DROPOUT ADMINISTRATION

Four major central offices have had responsibility for administering the dropout prevention initiative in New York City public schools: an Assistant Superintendent for Dropout Prevention, at first responsible to the Deputy Chancellor for Finance, currently to the Executive Director of the High School Division, directs the Dropout Prevention Program (DPP); the Office of High School Support Services, also in the High School Division, oversees the high school AIDP programs; the Office of Student Progress in the Chancellor's office governs both DPP and AIDP middle school programs, and

the Office of Collaborative Programs, also in the Chancellor's office, manages the AIDP job programs.

This fragmentation is a telling comment on the central board's management style. Each administrative arrangement arises as an immediate need is identified; none is based closest to where the schools operate, in the community school districts, or in the regional offices of the high schools, for instance. Unfortunately, there is no history of sound working relationships between the Chancellor's office and the districts to draw on, nor is there evidence of collaboration between community school districts and high schools.

The program responsibilities and administrative styles of the various offices are described below.

### OFFICE OF DROPOUT PREVENTION

Specially appropriated city monies were used to establish ten high schools as "laboratory" schools in which different dropout prevention program models were to be "tested." The Office of Dropout Prevention was created to oversee this experimental program and large investment of money by the city. Because of the highly visible nature of the program, an office was set up outside of existing jurisdictions (the Division of High Schools and borough offices) and assigned to an able and popular principal, designated as Assistant Superintendent for Dropout Prevention. He was assisted by a small staff of five and allowed to work directly with the schools.

City monies were also used to "test" program models in 29 middle schools which were feeders to the ten high schools. These schools' programs, however, were managed by the Office of Student Progress, which also had responsibility for state funded middle school programs (see below).

Despite the fact that DPP school staff did not participate in the design of program models and were not allowed to adopt a model of their choice, they were allowed to choose school improvement strategies from among a list of such items. Because of this, each school's program was unique to some extent.

Equally important to the programs' success was the fact that the assistant superintendent was able to establish a collaborative process for implementation and continued program development. This process included a month-long planning session during the summer, called the Summer Institute, a two-day retreat to examine the overall dropout prevention initiative, and monthly problem solving meetings during the school year. A dropout prevention team of 10 to 12 staff persons from each school attended; each team included the program facilitator, teachers, paraprofessionals, and staff of the community organization associated with the program. The staff of the dropout prevention office led these activities. Each central staff members' expertise was geared to an issue of key importance to the programs: budget management, parent involvement, collaboration with community organizations, job programs. These central staff members also met separately with the people at each school assigned to the issue.

Central staff identified two additional features of the collaboration as instrumental to their efforts. First, the small size of the group of schools with which they worked gave them ample opportunity to

become acquainted intimately with individual schools' problems. In a like fashion, school staff enjoyed a close association with the central office staff.

Second, the role of the central office staff was to provide training, technical assistance, and, generally, to help school staff solve problems as they arose; significantly, it did not include program monitoring. That is not to say that school staff did not keep records and share them with central office staff on a routine basis. For example, teachers whose task it was to develop jobs for students kept logs of the jobs they generated and submitted them at the time of their monthly meeting with the person in charge of job programs. The records served as a stimulus for feedback and discussion, and not merely as a record of compliance devoid of meaning to the person who labored to create them.

The collaboration yielded a number of positive results. School staff's ownership of their programs was marked. The individuals we interviewed expressed enthusiasm and positive regard for the programs. No program staff member conveyed a sense of having had a program forced upon him or her or of having to work within unwelcome program constraints. The Teacher's College evaluation of these programs also found that staff commitment to the programs was high (Grannis et al., 1987).

An exception to this general finding was registered by principals of schools which were assigned to the case management model. In these schools most of the dropout prevention budget was allocated to a community organization for the provision of case management services. Not surprisingly, these principals were unhappy that they received so little funding with which to make systemic improvements. They viewed their assignment as arbitrary and one they would not have chosen freely. Indeed, the assignment of schools to models had been arbitrary. Central office staff acknowledged it was a problem they would want to avoid in future undertakings.

The DPP office's collaborative approach is especially remarkable as it contributed to improved working relations between school and community organization staff. Collaboration between different organizations is difficult under most circumstances. In the case of schools and community organizations whose members have different training and orientations (education versus social work) and work under very different conditions (large, formal bureaucracy which employs unionized professionals versus smaller organizations which have more unstable funding and rely more heavily on paraprofessionals), collaboration can be expected to be quite difficult. Further, when one considers that community organizations were viewed by many as having been brought in to do what the schools could not, a collaboration between them would seem to be doomed from the start. In spite of these negative factors, good working relationships evolved as a result of the collaborative process which was used.

School staff were able to select the community organizations with which they wished to work; both parties were involved in all the planning and problem solving meetings which took place. Consequently, community organizations were viewed much more favorably in these schools than in those where no such joint program development occurred. A principal who had been assigned the case management model to his dismay, nevertheless indicated that if funding were withdrawn he would try to retain the services of the community organization he had come to value.

## OFFICE OF HIGH SCHOOL SUPPORT SERVICES

The Office of High School Support Services in the Division of High Schools is charged with implementing the state funded high school dropout prevention programs in 26 high schools. A staff of only four professionals and three field assistants have responsibility for facilitating and monitoring the programs. This central staff had no role in the design of the program models since they were hired after the models had been developed; they have no direct responsibility for promulgation of program guidelines which are chiefly carried out by the Chancellor's office nor do they supervise program staff. Borough program coordinators are charged with staff supervision and also monitor program implementation.

Programmatically, central staff can do little more than tinker at the margins. For instance, they have energetically pursued special projects for target students to supplement core services and a central advisory council composed of parents to increase parent involvement.

Staff visit program sites four times a year and make reports on individual components of the program. Monthly meetings with program facilitators are held at which program expenditures are reviewed and other technical assistance is provided. School input is solicited for purposes of revising program guidelines each year. However, only principals and program facilitators are canvassed, and their suggestions may be felt only to the extent that they are used to adjust guidelines which apply uniformly to all programs. A retreat is also held at which time decisions about new directions for the dropout prevention programs are reached. Again, school staff are excluded; attendance is restricted to central administrators. As a result, the central administration of these programs allowed little opportunity for school staff's direct involvement and development.

During the second year of the program, the guidelines permitted schools to use some of their existing funding for summer planning. Since this meant subtracting something from their already determined set of dropout prevention services, schools did not take advantage of the new provision. Moreover, the central office did not attempt to organize any joint planning session among the schools. Consequently, another opportunity for involving local staff in the development of a program tailored to the school's needs was missed.

Not surprisingly, school staff (with the exception of staff of the Strategies programs) expressed resentment about having to manage a program which had been externally imposed and often lacked a conviction that the programs were meaningful.

## OFFICE OF STUDENT PROGRESS

Middle school programs are administered by staff of the Office of Student Progress. Three professional staff and 12 field assistants have responsibility for 98 schools' programs. Teams of two field assistants cover 4 to 6 districts each, which amounts to 15 to 17 schools per team. Their job is to provide technical assistance and to collect data which is fed to the Office of Educational Assessment. It is clear that the size of the staff does not allow them to do much more than program monitoring. The professional staff reviews each school's program plan and meets with district superintendents about their programs as the need arises.

The current year's program guidelines allow schools to exercise a greater number of program options than in previous years and to eliminate a pull-out career awareness program, whose curriculum was also developed centrally and had been uniformly criticized by school staff. In addition, this year, district workshops for school staff and central office representatives were held at the beginning of the term. PEA's 1986-87 dropout prevention report recommended these kinds of changes, and we are pleased to note a trend toward greater responsiveness to school staff on the part of the Office of Student Progress. On the other hand, the schools' discretion to adapt a dropout prevention program to their needs remains at a bare minimum.

The uniformity of the programs across the boroughs, districts, and schools with differing exigencies is stultifying. A single model was assigned to the participating middle schools. The only significant difference across programs was that in 14 schools, the Board contracted with community organizations to provide some of the services. Despite the fact that the model was based on a successful district program, there is not a good basis for expecting a single model to apply equally well across so many schools.

We found principals and program staff highly dissatisfied with the programs in the middle schools we visited during both years of our study. No trend toward greater comfort with the program was noted from the first to the second year. Some principals and program facilitators were grateful to have additional monetary support and took a program that they were not altogether pleased with and ran with it. In many cases, program staff attempted to alter the program in ways they felt better accommodated students needs, while maintaining a facade which matched the official guidelines. In one school, a program facilitator with counseling credentials used the career awareness classes as a means of exploring the common social and emotional concerns of the students. The facilitator had found a room in the school for the students, and allowed them to decorate it. She held "career awareness" classes there as well as after school tutoring to which the facilitator brought refreshments and allowed students to bring younger siblings for whom they had after school responsibility. The facilitator's commitment to dropout prevention is unquestionable, but to the official program it is grudging. Other school staff who expressed more divergent ideas for dropout prevention programs did not act on them.

In other schools where resistance to the program ran very high, it was difficult to find a program at all. Staff had made a modicum of effort to accommodate the new program and appeared to be playing a waiting game. They expected program funding to be withdrawn after the three year period for which funding was assured. In one school, no room had been set aside for students in the program. Teachers who conducted after school tutoring for students complained that their supervisors had made little effort to encourage students to attend: as a matter of school policy, students who attended the after school program had to leave the building first before being allowed to reenter to attend the tutoring sessions. Eventually, the after school program was terminated because the school could not maintain the minimum attendance requirement.

Under a system which generates as little school commitment as we observed in some schools, central office staff are forced to deal in large part with issues of school compliance. Considerable effort during the first two years was directed to detecting cases where schools used dropout prevention funds to supplant positions which were supposed to be supported with the school's own tax levy base. During the current year, staff expected to be pursuing delayed hiring practices more assiduously. Last year,

schools were informed that monies which were not used would be taken away. Up to that time, program monies which were unspent at the end of the year could be used for other purposes.

A third major focus of central staff monitoring was student attendance at after school programs. The central administration had noted students' poor attendance at after school activities during the first year of the program and responded with more stringent requirements. Schools were required to record students' daily attendance and to demonstrate an average daily attendance of 12 students in order to maintain funding for the program. Program guidelines also stipulated the length of the after school sessions (two hours), the number of days per week (2 to 3), activities that could be held, the number of teacher positions (up to five teachers), and the student to staff ratio (15:1).

In practice, schools arranged for generally fewer teachers to staff the program than were allowed. In the three schools we visited, the program was staffed by two teachers. The highest daily attendance rates these teachers reported was 20; we never observed more than ten students present. Thus, only a small fraction of the 100 to 150 targeted students appeared to benefit from the after school program. Not surprisingly, many after school programs were terminated due to the unacceptably low attendance rates. However, the central office reinstated these programs within as short a time as two weeks if school staff reorganized their efforts to attract students.

Since the after school program represents an especially meaningful intervention for at-risk students given their heightened needs for tutoring, academic enrichment, adult supervision during the late afternoon, and increased opportunities to develop relationships with supportive school personnel, it is a tragedy that the programs functioned so marginally. It is clear that it is difficult to attract students with poor attendance histories to an after school program, yet isolated cases of programs which drew large numbers of students suggest it can be done. For example, one school operated a program with six teachers and the capacity for handling 80 students. In our view a larger number of schools would be able to operate successful programs if they did not view the entire dropout prevention program as an imposition. If schools were given the time and flexibility to create a program that reflected their strengths and interests and if encouragement and technical expertise could be supplied less remotely by district offices, after school programs would have a better chance of succeeding.

## OFFICE OF COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMS

The 1986-87 increases in New York City's allocation of state dropout prevention monies were used to create a job program at the high school level. The intent of the program was to use part time jobs as an incentive for students to maintain good attendance and academic performance; students are allowed to work only so long as they continue to make academic progress. The program employs staff of community organizations to develop part time jobs for dropout prone students as well as those whose improved attendance and academic records make them no longer eligible for the school's dropout prevention program.

As in the case of the AIDP program, the job program was developed centrally. The offices of the Mayor, New York City Youth Bureau, Chancellor, Board of Education Office of Collaborative Programs, and the Office of Legal Affairs jointly set program guidelines; community organizations were to provide a uniform set of services to target students, including vocational guidance and job

placement; schools were to refer students and provide other assistance community organizations needed to execute their obligations.

The Office of Collaborative Programs, which manages reimbursable funds dispersed by the federal and state governments and solicits and oversees monies from nongovernmental sources, was charged with implementing the program. Schools, districts, and borough offices were not given a role in developing the program. They were merely informed that they would have to accommodate the new staff with office space and pertinent student information.

The office contracted with 21 community organizations to set up job programs in 24 high schools. The original plan was to establish programs in the schools with dropout prevention programs, but the lack of response to the request for proposal for some schools led the office to arrange for programs in seven other high schools in which the community organizations wanted to work. Ironically, even community organizations had more say in the establishment of the program than the schools which are, after all, held most directly responsible for students' success.

School staff viewed the newly instituted AIDP job programs with a high degree of skepticism — in spite of the fact that high school staff widely expressed the need to provide at-risk students with work experience as part of their education. They are unconvinced that the program as currently conceived has the capacity to effect positive educational outcomes and concerned that the contractual obligations, which stipulate the number of jobs to be identified, will force community organizations to favor quantity over quality. Their views do not bode well for a smooth school/community organization collaboration.

The imposition of the job program on schools is held by staff to be just that, an additional interference, instead of a helpful resource to apply in maximally useful ways to their ongoing dropout prevention efforts. The lack of flexibility in tailoring a work experience program to individual schools is particularly glaring in one school where a school-run job program already existed. Although school staff have been engaged in the same kind of part time job development activities for dropout-prone students as the community organization staff are now, they find themselves operating two different programs side by side, potentially competing for the same students and jobs and unable to combine efforts fully to provide students with gainful, academically reinforcing employment.

## **CONTRASTING MANAGEMENT STYLES OF THE DROPOUT PREVENTION PROGRAMS**

The most important achievement of the Office of Dropout Prevention was that it was able to increase the schools' own capacities to pursue dropout prevention on a sustained basis. School staff have learned a great deal about how to make their school better accommodate at-risk students; they have also developed an appreciation for the role that community organizations can play in this endeavor. At the same time, this office operated outside of the existing hierarchy, a fact which contributed to its success, which means that no corresponding capacity-building within the high school system has occurred. Consequently, one must be concerned that the elimination of the Office of Dropout Prevention would jeopardize support for the program.

While the offices of High School Support Services and Student Progress have increased their efforts to involve school, district, or borough level staff, they have garnered far less local ownership of and commitment to dropout prevention efforts than we observed in the laboratory schools. The Office of Collaborative Programs may also find in time that it needs to rely more on local participation to improve implementation of the job program.

On balance, the effect of these centrally mandated programs has been to further weaken schools' ability to marshal the necessary resources to steer a coherent and consistent course which fully taps staffs' expertise and enthusiasm. Principals lack the authority to organize such efforts, as do district and borough superintendents.

Simply granting lower level administrators the authority to spend state and city appropriations as they like would not necessarily produce better dropout prevention programs. Collaborations that bridge the central Board of Education, district or borough, and schools must be arranged to build consensus around important priorities and to share information.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **TECHNICAL SUPPORT TEAMS**

A single network of technical support teams functioning like the Office of Dropout Prevention should be established in the seven high school superintendents' offices and in the 32 community school districts to support and facilitate comprehensive dropout prevention efforts. Staff members should be facilitators and their expertise should encompass knowledge and experience in jobs programs, community organizations, and parent involvement. With support from a headquarters office, they should be responsible for securing funding for school-based planning efforts, highlighting dropout prevention as a priority, facilitating communication among schools and between districts, and helping schools build capacity for successful local planning and implementation.

### **PROGRAM MODEL**

All dropout prevention efforts in New York City public schools should be based on the DPP model — with its strong school-based planning mode, collaboration among schools and communities, and focused technical assistance from an expert staff. This change will foster programs that meet local needs (at the school level) and encourage professional activity by school staff.

### **PLANNING SESSIONS**

Specific provision and time allocations must be made for planning dropout prevention initiatives and addressing problems as they arise without detracting from program efforts.

## **COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS**

Every effort should be made to involve community-based organizations in the school-based planning effort and to facilitate this collaboration. Schools should be allowed to choose the CBO with which they wish to collaborate and define the purpose of the collaboration.

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## CHAPTER THREE

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### ATTENDANCE OUTREACH AND MONITORING

Attendance outreach and monitoring were a focus of our 1986-87 examination of the New York City dropout prevention initiative because of their centrality to student retention and the enormity of the truancy problem. Frequent school absence is a critical indicator of school failure and of dropping out of school. Persistent truants fall behind their classmates in academic subjects and, in turn, are likely to miss more school. Students who are targeted for dropout prevention programs are unable to benefit from the provision of support services such as increased counseling and health referral that are available through AIDP/DPP programs if they are not in school.

Unfortunately, New York City schools have demonstrated longstanding difficulties in monitoring student attendance adequately. Schools are unable even to maintain accurate enrollment and attendance information for the thousands of students who move through the system each year. Student mobility is unusually high. Hundreds of students enroll well into the fall in many schools; many leave during the school year to visit foreign homelands or to enroll in another school district. Students have been found to be actively enrolled in two or more schools simultaneously. As a result, it is problematic to maintain up-to-date student addresses and to distinguish long-term absentees and dropouts from students who have enrolled in other school districts. Long-term absentees, or students who have been absent from school for 20 or more consecutive days, are frequently dropped from the enrollment books both because staff are unable to determine their status and because of the pressure to improve attendance rates.

New York State Law requires that youngsters attend school until the age of 17. The New York State Board of Regents is currently examining the merit of raising the legal age of exit to 18. Yet, no agency in New York City is prepared to enforce even the current law. Children's service agencies are overwhelmed with child abuse and neglect cases. Truant officers on the police force exercise the limited responsibility of returning truant youths to the school building. And, the schools have nowhere near the resources necessary to monitor students' attendance or to follow them through the juvenile justice or family court system. The number of attendance teachers whose specialized task it is to resolve attendance problems in New York City middle and high schools is at a record low. It has fallen from about 600 before the city's fiscal crisis in the mid 1970's to 145 in 1987.

The primary impetus behind the 1984 Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention law was the recognized need to bolster the school's capacity to monitor student attendance and to provide support services that would help eliminate the causes of absenteeism. Improved attendance as well as school completion rates are the central objectives of the initiative. Schools are targeted to receive AIDP and DPP funds on the basis of low attendance rates. Within schools, students are targeted for service primarily on the basis of poor attendance histories, and programs are evaluated on the basis of improvement in attendance rates for targeted students. See Appendix B Board of Education established performance objectives.

Since the New York State school aid formula is based, in part, on attendance, improving attendance has the added significance of driving up schools' allocations. Sadly, the schools most in need of augmented resources to improve student performance receive less by this formula. AIDP legislation is, in effect, a roundabout means of rectifying the unfairness of this formula, albeit an inadequate one; the difference between basing state aid on attendance rather than on total enrollment is \$135 million this year, in contrast to the \$30 million allocated to New York City for AIDP in the 1987-88 academic year.

## **SYSTEM-WIDE CONDITIONS**

The high poverty rate among students (described in Chapter 1) creates additional conditions that deter regular school attendance. Family stress and health problems supply multiple reasons for not coming to school and severely tax the school's capacity to follow up absenteeism and resolve truancy problems.

In view of the fact that the New York City schools involved in the dropout prevention initiative serve a student body that is demographically at risk of dropping out of school, the absence of the extra staff and resources required to monitor these students is unacceptable. On a school by school basis there has been less than a full time staff person, traditionally, an attendance teacher, whose primary responsibility it is to intervene in cases of absenteeism and to follow truants through the social service and juvenile court system. According to 1986-87 records maintained by the central Board of Education, 65 attendance teachers currently serve 32 school districts; 80 attendance teachers serve 112 high schools. This means that on average, each district has a little more than two full time equivalent (FTE) attendance teachers to serve middle schools, and each high school has .7 of a FTE attendance teacher.

Although the funds provided through the AIDP and DPP initiatives have bought additional staff and resources to carry out attendance outreach and monitoring tasks, they do not alter the number of attendance personnel who are available on a schoolwide basis. The categorical nature of AIDP programs and DPP middle school programs determine that only a small group of the students with attendance-related difficulties are served. Neither incipient truants nor most long-term absentees receive attention. School administrators of the AIDP and DPP schools we visited most often reported that their dropout prevention program had not solved the full extent of the problem of student absenteeism. Indeed, schoolwide attendance rates of the schools involved in the dropout prevention initiative show little change (Office of Educational Assessment, 1987).

## **DROPOUT PREVENTION PROGRAM EFFORTS**

As described in the AIDP/DPP program guidelines, attendance outreach and monitoring procedures consist of efforts by program staff to keep track of attendance patterns of targeted students on a daily basis; to intervene at an early stage when attendance problems surface by immediately contacting the

student and his or her family after one or two unexplained absences; and to make home visits when absenteeism persists. We interviewed central administrators and the principal and program staff at three middle schools and four high schools to assess the potential of these activities, their strengths, and weaknesses.

In AIDP and DPP middle schools and AIDP high schools, staff are required to serve 150 students. These students must meet criteria established by the Board of Education. The Board's priority is to serve 7th to 10th grade students with a poor record of attendance from the previous year. For example, middle school students with more than 15 days absent and high school students with more than 20 days absent are in the previous spring semester targeted. Additional criteria are applied when the above fail to yield 150 students. At that point, schools may include a) students with slightly fewer absences and another at-risk characteristic such as being overage and b) long-term absentees who have been present ten days during the current year may also receive attention. Appendix C contains Board of Education student selection criteria.

DPP high schools are allowed to serve the number of 9th and 10th graders which corresponds to the school's annual number of dropouts. Targeted students must meet the same criteria used for AIDP schools. In all cases, students do not receive close attention until they have developed a serious pattern of absenteeism.

Middle school program guidelines specify the personnel to be used for attendance services: Two full time family assistants or a .3 attendance teacher and one full time family assistant. The latter option is roughly equivalent in dollars to the former. In AIDP high school programs, funds can be used to hire two full time family assistants or one full time school neighborhood worker. In DPP high school programs, funds were spent on the same types of personnel, but the number varied according to the number of targeted students. In addition, part and full time guidance counselors or social workers were hired for the programs; they worked closely with the paraprofessionals. Both middle and high schools with community organization-operated programs used CBO case workers for the most part to conduct attendance monitoring and outreach. In addition, funds were earmarked for transportation, telephone, and postage used to make family contacts, and for attendance incentives.

We discovered that few schools chose to hire attendance teachers. Instead, they opted to employ paraprofessionals both because they are cheaper and because they are available on a full time basis. Administrators felt strongly that the effectiveness of attendance teachers is mitigated by the fact that they have to serve more than one school. As a result, they know students less well and are less accessible to the school. Attendance teachers are hired by the district office or high school borough office and assigned to several schools. Consequently, individual schools have no unique claim to or control over attendance teachers.

The paraprofessional staff who have been hired to monitor students' attendance bring needed qualities to the position. Staff are young, frequently from the school neighborhood, and often of the same heathenized as students. They seemed to care about the school and community and were committed to their jobs.

Much of the paraprofessionals' work such as monitoring daily attendance did not require a high level of skills, however, they were unable to carry out many related functions because they lacked

specialized training. For example, they were not able to counsel students or to intervene in the student's home environment. Guidance counselors assigned to the program are highly qualified to provide assistance to students and their families, but lack insurance necessary to make home visits. cursory training of the paraprofessionals was provided by district and borough offices during the first two years of the program, but was clearly inadequate in terms other than simply orienting new staff to their jobs. In the current year, the Office of High School Support Services has arranged more extensive training for family assistants through their union.

CBO programs provided the best model for attendance monitoring and outreach services. Trained mental health workers made student and family contacts and were supervised closely and regularly by a mental health professional, most often, a social worker. Their clinical model of service delivery is clearly appropriate for the severely troubled backgrounds presented by targeted students. Like Board of Education paraprofessionals, the case workers tended to be the same ethnicity as students.

## DAILY PROCEDURES

Staff indicated that attendance monitoring and outreach procedures were basic to the operation of the program and also critical to its success. Program staff maintained extensive records of such activities and, in fact, were evaluated by the Board of Education on the basis of these records.

In both middle and high schools, school clerical staff in the attendance office collected and recorded attendance for all students. The programs' family assistants used this information to monitor the daily attendance of targeted students. Staff of two high school programs and one middle school program reported that regular meetings were held with staff in the attendance office. In another high school, although regular meetings were not scheduled, staff indicated that there was a close working relationship between family assistants and workers in the attendance office. One CBO middle school program was the notable exception to these procedures. CBO staff indicated that attendance information that had been collected by the attendance office contained inaccurate data on student enrollment status and out-of-date addresses and phone numbers. As a result, program staff assumed the responsibility for collecting attendance information directly from teachers.

In the typical sequence of events, after a targeted student was absent one or two times consecutively, phone calls were made to the student's home in order to contact the student and/or parent. Some schools used automatic dialing machines to make the calls. Staff at two of the middle schools indicated that parents were difficult to contact by phone. At one of these schools, staff indicated that two-thirds of the parents did not have telephones; at the other, staff indicated that only 50% of the parents could be reached by phone. Some schools also had a computerized system to track cutting (students' failure to attend classes after they came to school). The computer automatically sent out weekly cutting cards to parents, but central administrators held that most schools still did not have an adequate means of monitoring in-school absence.

In only one high school program did staff report that efforts to prevent absenteeism were in place. In this program, staff made wake up phone calls to targeted students to remind them to come to school

and actually went out to the students' homes to pick them up on days when they were not in school.

Home visits were conducted when school absence had persisted over several consecutive days or when previous attempts to contact the parent had been unsuccessful. In school-based programs, family assistants made home visits for limited purposes, chiefly to make face to face contact with the parent about their child's absences and to request that the parent return to school to meet with the guidance counselor. In CBO programs, home visits were substantively different from those conducted by family assistants. They typically included a written or verbal assessment of the home environment and counseling with the parent and/or student.

Across schools, staff reported conducting an average of 21 home visits per week. However, this number varied greatly. Staff of one high school program made home visits only as a last resort for dealing with absenteeism and conducted only two home visits per week. By contrast, in a CBO middle school program, home visits constituted the core of program activities; staff reported making 45 home visits per week.

Home visiting was named as the most effective attendance outreach mechanisms by four out of five staff to whom we spoke about attendance outreach/monitoring procedures. Again, staff felt that parents were generally responsive and welcoming; only one staff person mentioned that parents were ever nasty or suspicious. Staff felt that face to face contact with parents made them more attentive to their child's attendance problems.

## CONCLUSIONS

Our interviews with program staff indicated that outreach activities to absentees were in place and that appropriate monitoring activities were conducted routinely for those students who had been targeted for service. At all schools, a notable attempt was made to contact students and parents each time attendance difficulties began to resurface. Home visits served the extremely useful function of establishing a face-to-face contact with the student's family.

Despite the evidence that a great deal of emphasis is placed on attendance monitoring and outreach activities, it is our view that these activities are not comprehensive enough to address the needs of targeted students and are not broad enough to address schoolwide attendance difficulties. Although "absence management" of targeted students is strong and well established, there were relatively few preventive activities in place. Only one school reported attempts to prevent school absence by calling students at home before the school day began or by escorting students from home to school.

Home visits, in particular, do not realize their full potential in school-based programs. In the majority of these programs, home visits were merely an additional mechanism for monitoring and contacting students when they were absent from school. Thus, an important opportunity to address the root family and emotional circumstances which often contribute to students' absenteeism is missed. Family

assistants simply are not equipped to carry out the level of intervention which may be required to prevent future truancy. The existing strengths of family assistants in conjunction with counseling and assessment skills comparable to those of the CBO case workers would make family assistants a much more valuable resource.

Finally, current attendance monitoring and outreach activities across all dropout prevention programs do not reach the total population of students who are incipient truants, long-term absentees, or at risk of dropping out for other reasons. As previously stated, intensified services could be extended to these students only on a very limited basis. Clearly, the application of Board-specified eligibility criteria insures that some needy students are served while at the same time forecloses the opportunity to serve other needy students.

In order to address schoolwide needs, the numbers of support staff available to pursue improved attendance must be increased. School-based teams of guidance counselors and family assistants now operating within the dropout prevention programs must be deployed schoolwide. The present astronomically high counselor/student ratios, often as high as 1:600 or 700, must be reduced. Ideally, these teams would work with small groups of students and their teachers (like those created through the high school house plan) in an informed and consistent manner over the entire course of the students' stay in school. Such an organizational scheme would make more efficient use of staff as well since their services would be mutually supportive and coordinated to reduce redundancy (Phillips, 19). Further, these teams should be able to refer their most troubled students to a CBO working within the school.

We have concluded that schools are in urgent need of the staff and resources to address absenteeism as it exists schoolwide — not just as it exists among a circumscribed group of students. Increased attention and funding must be allocated to augment schoolwide attendance outreach and monitoring activities if the high absentee and dropout rates of the AIDP and DPP schools are to be reduced by meaningful amounts.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **LEVEL OF PERSONNEL**

Additional personnel are required to attain schoolwide benefit from increased attendance monitoring and outreach. Sufficient funds should be allocated to enable individuals to serve a single school, as well as to reduce counselor/student ratios. This also requires the addition of support personnel such as paraprofessionals and mental health workers. Hiring should be carried out in consultation with school administrators so they have greater control over staff.

## **PARAPROFESSIONALS**

Paraprofessionals, at both the middle and high school levels should be provided training by experts in the guidance and social work fields. This training should be decentralized to district and regional offices.

## **GUIDANCE TEAMS**

Teams of guidance counselors and paraprofessionals should be deployed to conduct attendance monitoring and outreach. Teams should be assigned to small units of students (newly created Ninth Grade Houses in high schools and small units in middle schools) rather than grade levels to provide for ongoing support. Teams should coordinate their work with CBO's operating in their schools. All should develop proactive approaches to supplement current activities.

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## CHAPTER FOUR

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### WORK PREPARATION AND EXPERIENCE

Across the country, efforts to increase schools' holding power frequently involve in-school career education and/or out-of-school work experience. In New York City, job programs have become a major feature of the dropout prevention initiative at the high school level. It is widely believed that traditional academic programs are not suited to the needs of marginal students, and that a program geared to preparing such students for the world of work is both more appropriate and appealing to students.

Given national and increasing local emphasis on job programs for at-risk students, job program policy became a focus of PEA's second year of study of dropout prevention programs. During 1986-87, PEA staff examined all work experience programs funded with dropout prevention monies at both the high and middle school level. Staff interviewed central administrators and staff providing technical assistance to schools, school program facilitators and job developers, staff of community organizations which were hired to operate job programs in schools, and students.

Our review indicates that paid work experience is highly valued by students, but that programs currently serve a very limited set of purposes and make no direct contribution to students' academic progress. In view of the need for significant systemic change in the very troubled schools involved in the dropout prevention initiative, it is distressing that these programs fall short of providing students with strong alternatives to the traditional route to graduation. We support the inclusion of job programs as a component of dropout prevention, however, we think the current program can be made more effective.

In the following sections a broad overview of national and New York City job programs is presented and local programs are described in detail.

### OVERVIEW OF JOB PROGRAMS IN THE UNITED STATES

Preparation for work and labor force participation are frequently included in programs for dropout-prone youths across the country. A national survey of dropout programs by the U.S. General Accounting Office (1987) found that 68% of the programs offered career counseling; 62% helped students find jobs; 55% conducted job skills training; and 51% placed students in part time jobs. A program's link to employers was often viewed by administrators as crucial to program effectiveness. Although some administrators reported that jobs interfered with students' progress in school, more saw a need for more vocational education and work experience. Typically these programs are targeted

at youths no younger than 14 (the youngest age at which a student is permitted to work under New York State law).

Another national survey of dropout prevention programs identified 14 exemplary programs (Orr, 1987); eight of these had the objective of exposing students to the world of work in one way or another, but only one placed students in part time jobs during the school year. The others provided mentorships with business employees, job preparation services, limited unpaid internships, summer jobs, or priority hiring upon graduation. PEA concludes that a crucial feature of successful programs is linking basic instruction to experiential learning (job training for example) so that they reinforce one another.

A literature review of dropout prevention programs which emphasize vocational education concurs (Hamilton, 1986). Programs which integrate on-the-job learning with in-class instruction have demonstrated positive effects on students; one program which sought only to place students in jobs during the school year and summer had positive, but weaker results.

Hamilton urges that out-of-classroom educational programs be included in current efforts to reform secondary schools. We agree with the recommendation and see such programs as an appropriate element of the restructuring of high schools for an enhanced dropout prevention strategy. Moreover, we emphasize that the experiential learning approach is as relevant to middle schools as to high schools. Furthermore, in our view experiential learning benefits all students, not just marginal ones, and should be accessible to any interested student.

## **JOB PROGRAMS IN NEW YORK CITY'S DROPOUT PREVENTION PROGRAMS**

PEA's study of the 1985-86 dropout prevention programs revealed widespread interest among city high school staff in providing at-risk students with jobs. Job placement emerged as one program component among others which school staff repeatedly cited as needed to complement their existing dropout prevention services. At that time only two DPP high schools offered students paid part time jobs in the community as part of their dropout prevention program. Four DPP schools placed students in non-paying educational internships through a community-based organization program. Eight DPP schools paid students to work as school aides. None of the AIDP schools offered paid work experience; three had CBO-sponsored educational internships. Students in those few high schools which offered "real, paying jobs" in the community expressed a great deal of enthusiasm about them; many more students than could be accommodated by budget allocations desired to have these jobs.

During the 1986-87 school year, augmented AIDP funding was used, in part, to create a CBO-operated job program. Twenty-one CBOs were hired to provide part time job placement services in 24 high schools. The new AIDP programs were implemented in 12 AIDP high schools and seven schools not previously involved in the dropout prevention initiative, as well as five DPP schools. In addition, middle schools also were permitted to arrange limited work experiences for their students as part of an optional extended school day program. Sixteen middle schools (out of 98) in 11 districts did so. These work/study programs generated great staff and student enthusiasm and were viewed by both borough and administrators as some of the more successful programs.

## HIGH SCHOOL JOB PROGRAMS

Central administrators of both AIDP and DPP high school job programs conceptualize their goal as one of motivating students to stay in school by providing them with jobs in return for satisfactory performance. Students are required to maintain passing grades and good attendance in order to retain part time jobs across AIDP and DPP schools. Student eligibility for the two programs differ, however. In all of the AIDP job programs, the same criteria apply: students are eligible if, a) they have improved their attendance and grades to the point where they are no longer eligible for the core dropout prevention program, b) if they are eligible for public assistance and, c) if they are regarded by the principal as most likely to benefit from part time employment. In contrast, DPP, in keeping with its school-wide approach and local prerogative, serves a broader group of students that varies according to each schools' program. Targeted groups include students viewed as at risk for diverse reasons, long-term absentees, and graduating seniors.

### ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT/DROPOUT PREVENTION PROGRAM

The AIDP job program is administered by the Office of Collaborative Programs which also hired the community based organizations (CBO's) that carry them out. Three full-time staff are assigned to monitor the program. Program guidelines developed by its director specify the set of activities to be performed across all school sites.

CBOs are required to assess students' programmatic needs, develop job readiness training, develop jobs commensurate with students' interests, academic performance, and ability levels; monitor on-the-job performance, and maintain programmatic records for all students. High schools are required to identify students who meet eligibility criteria and refer those students to the CBOs, develop additional criteria with the CBOs when the pool of students exceeded the limits of the CBOs funding level, provide the CBOs with schedules, attendance records and any other relevant data in order to help resolve program and individual participant's problems, provide space for the CBOs to conduct specific activities, and provide an on-going coordination between the part time job program and existing related programs in school.

CBO contracts specify the number of jobs to be developed in each school. Job development is not a small task given the fact that employers must pay students' wages. Unlike the DPP program, the AIDP program does not allocate funds for student stipends. Additionally, CBO staff are supposed to locate jobs in the general vicinity of the school, ensure that work schedules do not interfere with school work and, if possible, arrange for jobs to continue through the summer.

More than half of the students enrolled in the programs had been placed in part time jobs by the end of the 1986-87 school year despite the January to March start-up date. Students are working as clericals, messengers, office machine operators, busboys, sales clerks, etc. Some of the jobs, particularly in the fast food chains, are very low level and offer little opportunity for advancement. School staff noted that the quotas set for CBOs act as a disincentive to locating more promising jobs.

Students are expected to work a minimum number of ten hours per week but, curiously, program guidelines establish no maximum number of hours. Many students are, in fact, working more than twenty hours a week. Research studies (Greenberger & Steinberg, 1986) have shown that if work consumes too much of students' time, it interferes with school work; work schedules of more than 14 hours a week for sophomores and greater than 19 hours for seniors were linked to poor academic progress. Therefore, the possibility that student jobs will detract from rather than enhance student performance looms as a problem for this program.

The major strength of the program is the CBOs' provision of vocational guidance and job readiness training, services not always offered to the same extent by school staff of dropout prevention programs. Job readiness training consists of: job search and interviewing techniques, job application completion, how to dress for an interview, supervisor/employee and employee/employee relationships, work behavior, the importance of school performance for future career options, and banking and budgeting.

## **DROPOUT PREVENTION PROGRAM**

The DPP job program operates in the ten laboratory schools and consists of part time in and out-of-school work programs and a full time jobs for seniors program. The program is under the jurisdiction of the Office of Dropout Prevention which oversees all other dropout prevention activities in those schools. A director of job development has direct responsibility for job services. Five teachers were hired as job developers and to operate the job programs at each of five DPP high schools. CBOs generally implemented job programs in the other schools. DPP school staff were not required to adhere to strict guidelines. Rather, school staff were involved in choosing and developing appropriate programs for their particular schools. Therefore the programs vary among DPP schools. In addition, DPP job programs seem to be more concerned with the development of jobs which afford students opportunities for responsibility and advancement. The following programs are currently in operation:

### **In-School Jobs**

One hundred nineteen students at eight Dropout Prevention high schools are working as school aides and being paid the minimum wage out of DPP funds. The jobs consist of clerical work for teachers and administrators, and tutoring and handywork to improve and beautify the school. Students generally work a maximum of four hours a day. A new mentoring program is also being organized for high school students to orient junior high school graduates to high school during a one week period in the summer and then throughout the school year.

### **Out of School Jobs**

#### **1. Project Connect**

A job training and work experience program sponsored by Shearson Lehman/ American Express. The program is for long term absentees and alternates a week of school with a week of work. Students are paid by American Express and receive training both in classes and on the job. All students

are guaranteed a full time job with the company upon graduation. (Twenty-five students from Prospect Heights High School)

## 2. Job Corps

Students work approximately fifteen hours per week and are paid out of DPP funds for work experience jobs in the community. Students work for various employers including the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development, Wyckoff and Woodhull Hospitals, Bushwick Senior Citizen's Center, a retail store, and a physician. Work runs the gamut from clerical duties to working with patients to sales. (Sixty-seven 9th and 10th grade at-risk students at Bushwick High School).

## 3. Jobs for Seniors Program

Job developers designed a job preparation program for seniors which includes training workshops on the variety of available jobs, resume writing, interviewing techniques, dress code, appropriate work behavior, and employer expectations. Their goals were to assess, screen and match students' abilities, interests, and personalities with the needs of prospective employers and to try to develop jobs that promised advancement and increased responsibilities. At those schools where there were no DPP-paid job developers, CBOs served a similar function. To date, 150 jobs which are primarily clerical, computer, and sales-oriented have been developed. (Approximately 380 students in five high schools).

## 4. Training and Special Programs for Seniors

In addition to training given by job developers, the DPP staff arranged for the New York Postal Data Center to give workshops. The workshops conducted by the New York Telephone Company focused on what students should expect on the job, leadership issues, budgeting money, and how to solve problems. Another series of classes taught by the New York Postal Data Center are designed to prepare students for job hunting. Topics included writing resumes, filling out job applications, interviewing techniques, appropriate dress for interviews, and following up on job leads. (Students at most DPP schools).

## 5. Nehemiah II

East Brooklyn Churches, the New York State Bankers Association, and the City University of New York have collaborated on the Nehemiah II School/ School Project, a program developed to encourage teenagers in East Brooklyn to stay in school. During the three-year period of this pilot project, Chase Manhattan, Citibank, and Manufacturer's Hanover Trust will offer guaranteed full time work to graduating seniors. The criteria for admission to the program is five absences or less in the senior year. Before graduation, students are required to take workshops on resume writing, interviewing skills and gathering references. (Bushwick High School and Thomas Jefferson High School).

## **AIDP AND DPP JOB PROGRAMS**

### **OPERATION SUCCESS**

The Federation of Employment and Guidance Services (FEGS) provides job readiness, skills training, and job counseling among other prevention services at both AIDP and DPP schools. FEGS counselors first assess students' vocational and career interests and then develop employment programs to meet their needs. Students can participate in one of three programs or a combination of all three to develop vocational skills, self-confidence, and a career path. The programs are:

#### **1. Skills Training Workshops**

After school classes for credit are held at a center in Manhattan for up to twenty weeks. Students have a choice of word processing, bookkeeping, accounting, jewelry, manufacturing, home appliance repairs, upholstery finishing, and building maintenance. They are placed in part time jobs by FEGS personnel upon completion of the training program. Only a small fraction of students choose to enroll because of travel time to the training center; few who enrolled were placed in jobs.

#### **2. Educational Internships**

Students are placed in non-paying, part time jobs in a hospital, a retail outlet, or a corporation. Lessons are taught at school to reinforce the employment experience. Students receive academic credit for participating in educational internships.

#### **3. Mentoring**

Students are paired with a mentor in different vocations. This program is particularly suitable for those students who are uncertain of a career choice.

## **JOB PROGRAMS BEYOND THE AIDP AND DPP PROGRAMS**

Many work experience programs funded by sources other than the state and city dropout prevention initiative exist in the AIDP and DPP schools. A few of these programs also target dropout-prone students, but most require higher levels of achievement and/or attendance. In most cases, however, there is little or no coordination of the job programs: programs sometimes compete for the same students and create wasteful duplication. Although it would be beneficial to all school job programs if staff members worked closely together to share business contacts, learn from each other's experiences, and switch students among programs in order to meet their changing needs, this rarely happens. In addition, none of the programs attempts to tailor basic skills instruction to work experience, even though research has shown this to be one of the elements of successful job programs.

To illustrate the confusing array of programs that exist in individual schools, those we encountered in a single DPP school are enumerated below. In this school, DPP staff who had been operating a job program for two years and had sought increased funding to accommodate the large numbers of students applying for jobs did not receive any additional funding. Instead, the Office of Collaborative Programs installed a CBO-operated job program of similar structure to the school-based program, but allowed school staff no part in shaping the CBO program or choice of CBO since these decisions were all made centrally. Not surprisingly, school staff felt frustrated. In the school were ten programs:

1. DPP Job Program: The part time job, school aide, and job placement for seniors programs are described above.
2. AIDP, CBO operated, part time job program are described above.
3. TOP: Training Opportunities Programs (TOP) provides training and employment in several fields that students study in school. Students in the 11th and 12th grades whose attendance and grades are satisfactory are eligible. Some of the occupational areas are clerical, advertising, graphics, electrical installation/repairs, automotive repairs, electronics, and computer technology. Students work for 15 hours 3 to 5 days a week. The program combines formal classroom instruction with on-the-job training.
4. COOP (Alternate Week): Cooperative education (COOP) program schedules 11th and 12th grade students with satisfactory attendance and grades for alternating weeks of school and work during the school year. Students receive instruction in business education and vocational/technical areas and are placed in clerical, automotive repair, and retail cashier/sales positions. Employability skills are provided through formal classroom instruction, informal counseling, individual instruction, and on-the-job training.
5. COOP (Part time): The part time cooperative education program provides after school and summer work experiences for 11th and 12th graders with satisfactory attendance and grades and gives these students in-class skills training in business education and vocational/technical areas, including retail cashier/sales, typing/word processing, messenger/mailroom, and fast food/restaurants.
6. STEP: The School to Employment Program (STEP) provides part time employment for 16 and 17 year old students considered at-risk of dropping out, and employability skills training including formal classroom instruction and informal counseling. Occupational areas are in the clerical and service sectors.
7. Nehemiah II: Thirty high school graduates were placed in bank teller positions. The program is described more fully above.
8. Mayor/Chancellor Summer Work Program: The city guarantees summer jobs to 25 high school juniors who have satisfactory attendance and grades.
9. New York City Youth Employment Program: Any student in the school may apply for a summer job through this program.

10. New York State Employment Counseling: A New York State Department of Employment Counselor is present in the school and available to all students.

Clearly, the plethora of job programs which existed prior to the AIDP and DPP programs suggests that more consideration of tailoring these programs to at-risk students should have been given, especially in view of the fact that many of these programs offer students greater benefits than do those created exclusively for at-risk students.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL JOB PROGRAMS

Middle school dropout prevention program administrators agreed with their high school colleagues that students should not work until they get to high school but should be introduced to careers at the middle school level. The consensus was that before students should work they need training to learn how to work, middle school should be a time for concentrating on job skills and job preparation activities, and there should be a connecting link between middle school and high school programs so that high school staff can follow up on what middle school students have already learned.

Included among the mandated components of the program was career education. All program participants, primarily students with poor attendance, were given two periods of classroom instruction per week. The curriculum consisted of personal and life skills development, values clarification, job readiness, career awareness exploration and future educational plans. School staff were encouraged to incorporate hands on experiences, such as school-based business enterprise, job shadowing, and role play, into the program.

The career education component was not well received by school staff, however. The major complaints were that students were pulled out of classes in order to attend career education classes and that the curriculum was age-inappropriate. The component has been eliminated for the 1987-88 school year.

Middle school program guidelines also established in-school business enterprises and work-study programs as optional after-school activities. The extended school day work-study program included four paid hours per week of on-site job experiences in neighborhood non-profit or social service organizations and two non-paid hours per week of after-school discussions with the work-study teacher. Work-study teachers were responsible for identifying appropriate work sites, providing pre-employment training of students, work-site monitoring of students' performance, and leading group discussions of students' work-study experiences.

Sixteen middle schools in almost as many districts (11) adopted work-study programs. Only in District 14, was an effort made to develop this type of program district wide. In that district, the District Attendance Coordinator, who is particularly familiar with the community, was able to arrange work-study programs for four of the five AIDP middle schools.

In District 11, the impressive success of one middle school's program led the other two middle schools

in the district to consider a work-study program for the current year. In that program, the facilitator arranged for fifteen 8th grade students to work at the Sound View Throgs Neck Health Center and the Comprehensive Child Care Center in the Bronx. The agencies gave the students on-the-job training and then placed them in clerical and child care jobs. Students worked after school two days a week for two hours each day. The third day they met with the facilitator for two hours to discuss their experiences. Students were paid out of AIDP funds only for the two days that they worked. The facilitator noted that students would have preferred to work the third day instead of discussing their experiences. The agencies were so pleased with the students who worked there they offered the possibility of summer employment. Although the facilitator did not give job readiness training this year, she now believes that the students would benefit from it and is planning to incorporate it into the program next year.

Across all work-study programs, students enthusiastically embraced the opportunity to obtain jobs for pay. As a result, student attendance at the program was high — unlike other after school programs. The most typical after school program consisted of a combination of tutoring and recreational activities. Despite the appropriateness of and need for these kinds of activities, they did not successfully draw students. As discussed in a previous chapter, many of these programs were terminated by the central board because of poor student attendance.

Staff were equally positive about the work-study program. It is clear that staff derive enormous satisfaction from being in the not too common position of providing students with an educational experience they intensely desire to have.

### **BENEFITS OF THE WORK-STUDY PLAN**

Clearly, the opportunity to earn money is the most attractive aspect of the work-study program for students. However, other aspects of the program may pay equally significant dividends, particularly for middle school students. First, students gain skills through experiential learning, that is, active participation in real world activities. It affords students an important, needed alternative to the passive instruction offered in most classrooms and increases the overall likelihood of engaging students in the learning process. In this regard, in-class career education has little value.

Second, students are exposed to out-of-school settings which do not carry a strong, negative association with failure; they may be more motivated to learn by having a fresh chance of succeeding at something.

Finally, students interact with other adults who provide models of responsible employees and may come to be highly valued in the lives of students who typically have not succeeded at forming positive relationships with school staff.

These program attributes add up to increased self-esteem for students, a lack of which most educators agree holds these students back from making progress in school.

That only 16 of 98 schools adopted a program with so much merit may be due to the difficulty inherent in locating community organizations and businesses which are willing to participate in a school

program. It takes considerable time and energy and, often times, clout to develop a collaboration; to involve the community in programs for youngsters who have proven difficult to educate requires even more resources. The most important asset to implementing this program would seem to be school or district staff member with extensive knowledge of the community, especially contacts with community leaders. The one district which adopted the work-study option in nearly all its schools with dropout prevention programs had such a person.

The work-study program would have particular benefits for a group of middle school students currently being neglected by the dropout prevention program — overage students. Current program guidelines stipulate that overage students can participate in programs only when schools are unable to identify a sufficient number of students meeting attendance criteria. In fact, the failure of current dropout prevention policy at both middle and high school levels to fully address overage students is a major oversight, which has not been rectified, despite an in-house evaluation of dropout prevention programs which recommended intensifying services to overage students. (Office of Educational Assessment, 1987).

As was noted in Chapter One, the number of youths who are overage in the dropout prevention schools is staggering. At the middle school level, according to 1984-85 school year data, the number of students who have reached the age of 14 (the age students are eligible to work), obtained a required work permit, and are overage for their grade is 41,160. Most of them are in grades 7 to 9. Considering the failure of school staff to attract truants to non-work related after school programs, it makes sense to rethink the guidelines to allow expansion of after school options that offer overage (and other) students work experiences.

These numbers of at-risk students underscore our claim that current programs do not meet the full extent of the need. After school programs are a severely underutilized feature of middle school dropout prevention programs. They have not been implemented to the full extent of the resources allocated for such programs; student attendance at existing programs is poor, with the exception of the work-study programs. While school staff should continue to try to attract truants to after school programs, staff should be given the latitude and encouragement to expand after school options which offer overage (and other) students out-of-school work experiences.

## CONCLUSIONS

The common goal of AIDP and DPP job programs is to provide students with highly desired, paying jobs as an incentive for good school performance. It is clear that students may try harder to avoid poor grades and attendance in order to keep or obtain jobs. At the same time, although some of these programs include in-school reinforcement of vocational skills practiced on the job, most do not directly link job experiences to academic instruction. Moreover, the large number of hours that students are allowed to work in the high school AIDP program may deter their progress. Particularly in view of recent reports that many students stay in school but do not graduate (Office of Educational Assessment, 1987), school planners should give high priority to developing curriculum and instructional techniques that link student work experiences to academic learning.

In addition to the benefits of work experience to students' learning and self esteem as described above, job programs provide other important benefits to students: they help them learn how to negotiate the world of work successfully. When CBOs are used to manage jobs programs they add many dimensions not usually available to students such as counseling, job readiness training and, in the case of FEGS, job skills training; when programs involve business corporations or other non-school institutions, on-the-job training opportunities and prospects for future employment are increased.

In light of the potential of work experience programs for enhancing student success, the current obstacles to program functioning should be removed. A major detraction of the AIDP job program is the over-prescription of staff activities and responsibilities. As noted in other chapters, the top-down management of programs dampens local creativity and commitment. Externally constrained programs also fragment the schools' endeavors, creating lack of coordination, redundancy, and competition. The AIDP program has made a valuable resource, CBOs, available to schools. Rather than setting CBOs apart from schools as central administrators have done by imposing CBOs' services on schools, school and CBO staff should be allowed to explore and develop programs together. Administrators can support this process by helping staff establish priorities and direction.

The city's schools with high rates of absenteeism and attrition share an urgency in the need to reshape the entire school to increase its holding power. To be sure, one of the ways in which these schools can do that is to make work experience more widely available to all students.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **THE NEED FOR JOBS**

Dropout prevention policy at both the middle and high school levels should stress work experience. Stipends for students should be a feature of all job programs. Schools and participating employers should contribute to a student's stipend.

### **MIDDLE SCHOOLS WORK EXPERIENCE**

The now defunct middle school career awareness program should be revived and modified to include a job component linked with academic curriculum. It should be developed at the school level.

### **OVERAGE STUDENTS**

Guidelines for dropout prevention efforts should be modified and special interventions planned to take account of the large numbers of middle school and high school students who are overage for their grade.

## **CURRICULUM AND WORK EXPERIENCE**

School staff should be encouraged to explore ways of incorporating the student's work experience into basic skills instruction.

### **AVAILABILITY OF JOBS**

Work programs should be available to all students, especially marginal ones. The variety and numerous jobs programs in a high school should be coordinated to provide the most effective opportunity for all students to obtain work preparation and experience.

### **COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS AND JOB PROGRAMS**

Schools and community-based organizations should design and operate work-study programs jointly. All schools should be enabled to collaborate with a community-based organization.

### **WORK STRUCTURE**

The number of hours a student works should be restricted to no more than 19 hours per week. Students should work fewer hours at the beginning of the work assignment and gradually increase their hours if their attendance and academic achievement have not been negatively affected.

### PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The benefits of parent involvement in the school for student success and positive school experiences have been heralded as an effective mechanism for addressing the difficulties that dropout-prone youth experience in school. Parent involvement has been considered an important component of the federal early childhood and elementary education programs such as Head Start and Follow Through since their inception and has been emphasized and studied in Title I, Title VII, and ESAA programs. However, as a recent review by the National Committee for Citizens in Education points out (Henderson, 1987), the belief that parents have relatively little influence on older children, combined with the amount of effort required to launch parental activities and the reluctance of parents to come in to school, often undermine serious or extensive efforts to involve parents in secondary school attendance efforts.

Although parent involvement is a required component of this year's Attendance Improvement/Drop-Out Prevention initiative, the scarcity of programs that successfully integrate parents into efforts to reduce truancy related problems bore out such difficulties. Nevertheless, PEA shares the view expressed by the practitioners we interviewed that parents must be brought into the efforts to retain and educate dropout-prone students.

Our exploration of parent involvement focused on mechanisms which had been developed by school staff to support families. Activities which were problem specific, such as attendance outreach activities and parent/staff conferences, were not considered as parent involvement. While such activities are clearly central to dropout prevention efforts, activities that are intended to familiarize parents with and help them feel comfortable in the school environment and to facilitate their role as educators of their own children, are a distinct program activity and are important in their own right. Thus, our aim was to learn how efforts could be made more supportive of family needs and to identify promising models of parent participation which took into account the life circumstances of parents and the consequent limitations of their capacity to become involved.

We looked at such efforts and posed three questions. Have any of the schools been able to organize and carry out parent involvement activities which were adequately attended? What do school personnel describe as the barriers to parent participation in school activities and can these barriers be accommodated within programs? Finally, are there models of parent involvement which may be congruent with both the current structure of the schools (i.e. hours, staffing patterns, organizational form) and the needs of parents (social, emotional, and educational) and which might readily be incorporated into existing programs?

## **CURRENT PARENT INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMS**

### **MIDDLE SCHOOL AIDP PROGRAMS**

At the middle school level, guidance, and counseling staff are required to organize a minimum of four formal parent activities which can include parent orientations to AIDP programs or high schools, joint parent/student activities, or parent educational workshops. Fifteen hundred dollars have been allocated to the middle school for parent activities as have fees for four 2-hour planning sessions for coordination of activities.

The AIDP guidelines for SOAR high schools also require guidance and counseling staff to develop parental activities which establish and maintain an ongoing liaison between the school and the home. Parent involvement funds for SOAR schools fall under the general category of guidance and counseling.

Despite this specific focus on parental involvement at the middle school level, the emphasis on parent involvement across programs varied greatly. Only one of the AIDP middle schools described attempts to offer a broad array of parental activities. These included a career day which brought employers and other professionals for the community to the school to discuss career options, a student attendance awards ceremony for AIDP parents, annual parent orientations to the AIDP program, and a series of parent workshops on topics of particular interest to parents. Although very few parents attended the orientations, program personnel felt that other program activities were well attended.

Another middle school reported that a few unsuccessful attempts had been made to provide activities for parents. Most notably, program staff had organized a trip to an evening basketball game which required students to be accompanied by a parent. The event was attended by ten out of 60 families. Program staff were also planning a luncheon for parents.

One CBO middle school reported that virtually no parental activities had been organized aside from routine attendance outreach activities and occasional parent-teacher conferences regarding behavior or truancy problems. It should be pointed out that family intervention through home visits was the primary focus of this program. However, the school guidance counselor reported that she was not permitted to make home visits and that she had not been provided with appropriate resources to work with parents (e.g., a private telephone and space). However, she expressed an interest in learning about parent involvement activities in other middle school programs.

### **HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

In the view of several key staff, high school students have reached an age and level of independence where parental intervention is ineffective. Despite this, the High School Dropout Prevention Office has also described a new emphasis on involving parents in drop-out prevention efforts.

At the high school level, there was also great variation in the number of parental involvement activities that were taking place. Two of the three DPP schools studied, reported that a variety of parental activities had been organized. At one of these, parents were asked to sit on the school advocacy council, a school governance body which oversees the functioning of school programs. The school also offered workshops on issues such as financial aid, housing, preparing children for college or employment, and organized comprehensive orientations to the AIDP program.

Parent support groups within each school cluster or smaller programs within the school were being planned, and the school had hired a bilingual Haitian teacher to provide counseling and program orientations for immigrant Haitian parents. The level of parent participation in these activities varied. Staff reported that parents attended and were interested in the orientation and the workshops. However, program staff reported great difficulty in recruiting parents to participate in instructional or school governance activities.

Another DPP high school had also organized a variety of parent activities. English as a Second Language (ESL) classes were offered to Asian parents by a P.M. School instructor. Staff reported that each cluster within the school had a parent advocacy council. The schoolwide high school orientation was organized within each cluster and a brunch was served to better attract parents. The brunch was attended by 178 families. However, neither of these activities were sponsored through DPP funds. The other high schools, including the one SOAR program that was visited, had organized relatively few parental activities. Both schools described parent/teacher conferences and attendance outreach activities. Otherwise, few parent activities were mentioned.

## **NEW WAYS TO INVOLVE PARENTS**

### **BARRIERS TO PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Staff across all programs reported that despite sometimes extensive planning, it was extremely difficult to recruit parents to participate in school events. Even within programs that had been able to recruit parents to school for an activity, there appeared to be a tremendous sense of frustration in the amount of effort required to recruit even a small number of parents to the events which had been organized. We asked school staff what they perceived to be the barriers to eliciting parental support and to recruiting parents to participate in school activities.

The most consistent response among staff was that there were tremendous structural constraints to parents' availability to participate in school events. The reality that many parents held two jobs, were unable to arrange for child care for other children, or had very little time to participate in school events were mentioned by all staff across all programs.

Staff also attributed difficulties in recruiting parents to participate in school activities and getting parents into the school to incongruities between the values of the school and those of the families of

students who attend them. Observations that parents felt alienated from the school, didn't trust or understand the school system, or were unfamiliar with the school environment were mentioned by staff at six out of the seven schools. It is important to note that many of the schools in our sample had large immigrant populations including Haitians, Jamaicans, and Puerto Ricans. Two schools had made attempts to address cultural barriers. As previously described, one offered ESL classes for Asian parents as part of the P.M. School activities in the early evening. Another had hired a bilingual staff member to provide guidance, counseling, and orientations for Haitian parents.

A possible limitation to efforts to involve parents may be that staff hold a pejorative view of parents. However, only a minority of staff expressed the opinion that parents simply lacked interest in their child's education. Moreover, staff, in some cases, attributed parents' lack of interest to their being too troubled themselves with problems including drug and alcohol abuse or to their inability to influence their older children — factors which have been given credence by other reports.

The majority of staff believed that parent involvement was an important program activity and that continued efforts should be made to support parents and to elicit their help in addressing attendance related difficulties. Even staff in programs with relatively little focus on parental involvement considered such activities to be important and were interested in the types of activities that were taking place in other programs.

### **PROGRAMS THAT OVERCOME BARRIERS**

The difficulties which staff expressed in recruiting parents to participate in school activities are not surprising. Facilitating parent involvement in school efforts is not a simple task. Educators and practitioners who have described other efforts to involve parents have highlighted similar barriers to successful parent participation. The social distance between parents and school staff is a well documented phenomenon. As the program staff we spoke with described, parents feel uncomfortable and estranged from the school environment. Teachers and other staff have traditionally interacted with parents only around problem behavior. Addressing the tension between the social environment of the school and the parents of students who attend them is an essential prerequisite to parental participation in organized activities.

In order to organize and implement successful parent involvement efforts, activities must be structured so that parents are available to attend. Organizing activities during the school day or activities that require extensive travel and/or time are wasteful. Although a few dropout prevention programs reported organizing activities during evening hours, efforts to accommodate or work around the constraints parents face were the exception. Though parents managed to come to special offerings such as career days or awards assemblies, routine events like orientations were difficult for parents to participate in during school hours.

Recognizing that it may also be difficult for school and program staff to work during evening hours, it is essential to consult parents about the timing of activities and to organize events which are convenient for parents. If school staff are unwilling or unable to host events when parents are most likely to be available, it may be possible to utilize CBO staff to organize and carry out parent activities,

although participation by school staff in some way is an absolute necessity. Otherwise, staff time and program resources are spent planning parent activities which few parents will attend, which compounds the frustration staff experience in their relationships with parents and the distance between parents and the school.

A potentially effective way of addressing the barriers between parents and schools is to create learning opportunities for parents within the school setting. In fact, school staff in sites which offered educational workshops, career days, and the like for parents consistently reported that such activities were an effective way to bring parents into the school and were well attended. As previously mentioned, parents of AIDP students are frequently at risk and undereducated themselves. Thus, schools can appropriately serve as an educational setting for parents of at-risk youth as well as for the youth themselves.

The consequences of offering educational opportunities for parents are multi-faceted. First, offering educational opportunities can serve an outreach function by attracting parents into the school building, and thereby decreasing their sense of discomfort in the school environment. Second, offering educational activities for parents can be viewed as a means toward empowering parents in relationship to the school. A review of parent involvement research concludes that offering educational opportunities for parents results in changes in parents' attitudes towards the school in general and towards the programs in particular. Parents often become more trusting and more supportive of programs and less likely to view schools as a forbidding place (Hubbell, 1983). Finally, increasing parents' skills and the educational competence of parents may have a direct effect on students' attitudes towards the value of education. Demographic data indicate that there is a significant link between parents educational attainment and dropping out of school. Children of fathers with eight or fewer years of schooling are almost three times more likely to drop out of school than children of fathers who have completed high school (Rumberger, 1980).

Another way to address the barriers between families and schools is to create settings which are easily managed and negotiated by parents. School staff we spoke with confirmed the notion that the school environment is intimidating and threatening for many parents. In a large school, it is difficult for parents to learn who to go to for a particular problem or concern and therefore it is difficult for parents to make positive contact with school staff. As one educator points out, For those parents from lower-class and minority communities, it is especially important that they be able to find faces in the crowd. Because they have had minimal experience in negotiating dominant external institutions or have had negative and hostile contact with social service agencies, their initial approaches to the school are often overwhelming and difficult (Lightfoot, 1983).

The existence of academic clusters within one DPP high school serves as a valuable mechanism for decreasing the extent to which parents feel overwhelmed by the school. Staff who had organized orientations by cluster in fact attributed the successful recruitment of parents to the familiarity of parents with the staff within clusters.

## CONCLUSIONS

A range of parent activities were described across the programs we visited. Examples of parent educational workshops, special events for parents, counseling and support, school governance activities, and program orientations were all available. It is important to recognize, however, that most efforts towards parent participation were concentrated within three of the seven schools. Two of these were DPP high schools. Thus, while a few schools could describe a broad array of parent activities, the majority of schools had a limited emphasis on the role of parents.

Information about successful alternative approaches to involving parents of at-risk youth was sorely lacking. Parent involvement activities were identified by program staff as an undeveloped but extremely important program component in last year's evaluation of drop-out prevention efforts. Across all program types — high school AIDP, high school DPP, middle school AIDP, and middle school DPP — greater emphasis on parent involvement was routinely cited as a change necessary to complement the existing program.

Families of students who are in AIDP and DPP programs are frequently "at risk" themselves. Many parents are from low income and educational backgrounds and endure a great deal of stress in their attempts to meet the basic demands of their day to day lives. Staff attribute the school difficulties experienced by many youngsters to family situations. It is necessary to empower parents and to support them in their roles as educators in order to achieve a balance between school and family needs. Parent involvement is a promising means for increasing the success of dropout prevention efforts with at-risk students. However, it is also an extremely complicated endeavor.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Schools, parents associations, and parents should be provided with the technical and financial resources to facilitate participation. A variety of efforts must occur simultaneously: 1) parental activities should be organized when parents are able to attend, e.g., in the evening with child care provided; 2) educational opportunities should be offered to parents to bring parents into the school building, increase their educational skills, and support them in their roles as parents and as educators; and 3) where possible, parental activities should be organized around smaller groups. The Ninth Grade House Plan groupings may provide an opportunity for this setting.

### COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS AND PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Schools should be encouraged to draw upon staff of community-based organizations to organize and carry out parent participation efforts by building upon the contacts these groups already have with parents through their outreach functions. This collaborative effort would engage parents, school staff, and community staff in their common pursuit of better student performance.

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## APPENDIX A

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### OVERAGE STUDENTS AT THE MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL LEVELS

#### Middle School Level

|                |              |
|----------------|--------------|
| 7th grade      | 10,456       |
| 8th grade      | 22,059       |
| 9th grade      | <u>8,645</u> |
| Total Students | 41,160       |

#### High School Level

|                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| 9th grade      | 37,425        |
| 10th grade     | 45,981        |
| 11th grade     | 31,270        |
| 12th grade     | <u>18,814</u> |
| Total Students | 133,490       |

|       |         |
|-------|---------|
| TOTAL | 174,650 |
|-------|---------|

Appendix A represents the number of overage students who are at least age 14 by grade level. Most of the 41,160 students are found in grades 7-9; only very small numbers of students who are 14 are found in the fifth and sixth grades. The current focus of the dropout prevention initiatives at the middle school level are grades 7-9; sixth graders can participate only in cases where too few students in higher grades meet program criteria. Although we cannot be certain how much overlap exists between students who are overage and have poor attendance histories, there is some correspondence. Were there perfect overlap, only 14,550 students or 35% of the 41,160 overage students receive needed dropout prevention services.

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## APPENDIX B

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### AIDP PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Excerpt from Special Circular No. 37, 1987-88  
Office of the Chancellor, New York City Board of Education

#### PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Every school funded with dropout prevention funds is required to have the following six program components in place at the start of the 1987-88 school year. All components apply to middle school, high school, and special education dropout prevention programs.

All targeted students must receive the services of all six components. The six components are to be fully integrated into a comprehensive program for each participant.

1. Facilitating Services to Students: As school-based dropout prevention programs bring an array of coordinated services to "at-risk" students, the function has been increased to a full time position. Each participating district and high school should determine how that full unit will be used within the school to fulfill the stated facilitation requirements. For example, a full time teacher may be assigned and made responsible for all facilitation tasks or a .4 teacher may be assisted by a school aide or paraprofessional.

Total costs for facilitation may not exceed that of a full time teacher. A teacher must be assigned for at least .4 of the total unit.

The person(s) in the facilitator's role will

- o serve as the advocate for all student program participants in the school;
- o coordinate all program components including school level linkages;
- o identify and track the progress of all targeted students (regular education and special education);
- o collect and report all data;
- o facilitate the activities of the school's pupil-personnel committee;
- o participate fully in the school's planning efforts to coordinate the use of compensatory education resources. It is recommended that the facilitator be a member of the school's CSIP Committee to assure close coordination of efforts;
- o facilitate the alternative instructional program by periodically team teaching with one or more project teachers;
- o provide ongoing monitoring services to students who were formerly in the program to assure no "slippage" in attendance or achievement;
- o communicate regularly with counselors and classroom teachers to ensure that students returning to school after extended absence receive transitional services as part of the Alternative Educational Program; and
- o communicate regularly with the HRC or other Department of Health personnel to assure appropriate levels and types of services are provided to students; and
- o meet regularly with AIDP school staff and program responsibility center staff.

The pupil personnel committee will recommend and follow up on a comprehensive framework of services for each targeted student. It should consist of: the facilitator; the principal or appropriate assistant principal; a dropout prevention guidance staff member; four other participants with demonstrable direct involvement with targeted students; and CBO staff members if appropriate.

2. Attendance Outreach: Each school must use appropriate outreach strategies to follow up on the absences of targeted students. Dropout prevention funds may not be used to provide mandated daily attendance services, but should encourage better student attendance through parent awareness of the child's poor attendance pattern and its educational consequences. Home contact and visits should be undertaken regularly. Building plans must describe how parents will be actively involved in program activities. Attendance incentives may also be used.
3. Guidance and Counseling Services: Appropriate counseling must be available to every targeted student and his or her family in order to identify and address individual problems that may contribute to poor attendance. Counseling in programs operated by the Board of Education may be provided by licensed or certified school counselors, school social workers, or school psychologists or by SAPIS workers with supervision. Building plans must describe how parents will be actively involved in program activities.
4. Health Services: Health services should include: review of health records; vision and hearing screening; provision for physical examination; referrals to appropriate health providers; and documentation of service delivery. All screening will be conducted, following parental consent, by appropriate trained and licensed/certified Board of Education, Department of Health, and/or community agency staff. The diagnostic information obtained will be used to make referrals to appropriate educational, physical, and mental health services available in the school and through local agencies. The aim of all screening is to identify particular remedial and counseling needs of students and to assist them in making a more successful academic and behavioral adjustment to school. Dropout prevention funds may not be used for direct health services, although student transportation to health referral providers can be funded.

5. School Level Linkages: All efforts to improve attendance and prevent students from dropping out must include special attention to students making the transition from middle to high school. Each high school receiving dropout prevention funds is expected to develop a plan and specific strategies for students in terminal grades at a minimum of three major feeder middle schools. Funds will be allocated for these strategies based upon the number of middle school students served, provided that the plan meets the following guidelines:

- a. the plan and strategies must be developed cooperatively by the high school and middle school staffs involved.
- b. only eligible feeder middle schools may participate.
- c. the strategies must be aimed at high risk students in terminal grades at the middle schools.
- d. each of these students should participate in activities at the zoned high school he or she is most likely to attend (one high school for each student). These activities should be designed to encourage active student engagement with the high school and may include student shadowing, visits to high school classes, student mentoring, and so forth. These intensive activities must be in addition to the high school orientation provided for all students.
- e. linkage activities must be initiated in the first half of the fall 1987 semester.

Each high school will work with at least three eligible middle schools, and it is very likely that each middle school will work with more than one high school. The aim is not just to provide general high school experiences for at risk students, but to help these students form connections with the high schools they will actually attend. This may not be possible in every case, but, whenever it is possible, students should be linked with the high schools to which they are most likely to be assigned. Specific guidelines for implementation of school level linkages are contained in Addendum to Special Circular #25 issued on December 19, 1986.

6. Alternative Educational Programs. Each participating school must offer an alternative educational program during the regular school day. The program implemented must incorporate appropriate basic skills instruction, individualized attention and transitional services that address the unique needs of students returning to school after an extended period of absence. These programs may not be supported with AIDP funds and must be integrated within the regular tax levy instructional program. Additional support must be provided with reimbursable State and Federal funds allocated to the school from sources such as Chapter I, PCEN et al.

#### PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

The following minimum performance objectives have been established by the Chancellor for all dropout prevention programs. These will be used by the Office of Educational Assessment as the basis of its evaluation of each program's effectiveness. Each school's plan should include these objectives:

1. A minimum of 50 percent of the students provided with dropout prevention services will have 1987-88 attendance that is better than in 1986-87.
2. A minimum of 50 percent of the students provided with dropout prevention services will pass at least one more subject in 1987-88 than they did in 1986-87. (This applies only to participating students who failed one or more subjects during the previous year.)
3. Starting with 1985-86 as a baseline year, a minimum of 50 percent of the students, ninth grade or below, provided with dropout prevention services will still be in school three years later.
4. A minimum of 50 percent of the high school students provided with dropout prevention services will earn sufficient credits to advance to the next highest grade.
5. A minimum of 50 percent of the middle school students provided with dropout prevention services will be promoted to the next highest grade at the end of the school year.

The goal of New York City's dropout prevention programs is that all participating students will improve their attendance and achievement. The previously listed objectives are based on the assumption that without the extra services provided by dropout prevention programs; many of the participating students would, in fact, leave school. For at least half of them to meet these specific objectives of improved attendance and achievement, therefore, would indicate that the program had been very successful.

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## APPENDIX C

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### AIDP SCHOOL AND STUDENT SELECTION CRITERIA

Excerpt from Special Circular No. 37, 1987-88  
Office of the Chancellor, New York City Board of Education

#### SELECTION OF SCHOOLS

Schools will be eligible to receive dropout prevention funding only if they:

- o serve students between grades 6 and 12; and
- o have an attendance rate at or below the citywide median, including long term absentees (LTAs) and special education students or participated in 1986-87 dropout prevention programs, including AI/DP and DPP.

In general, schools which participated in 1986-87 dropout prevention programs will continue to be funded in 1987-88, except where the appropriate superintendent proposes a change. All substitutions must be approved by the Office of Student Progress (for middle schools), and the Office of High School Support Services (for high schools). Final selection of schools to receive dropout prevention funding will rest with the Chancellor's Office.

Many selected schools may also be part of the Comprehensive School Improvement process as a result of being cited on SED's Comprehensive Assessment Report. In these schools, dropout prevention programs are to be fully coordinated with all school improvement efforts and must involve the school-based planning teams. It is recommended that the facilitator serve as a member of the CSIP Committee to enhance that coordination process.

#### IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITHIN SELECTED SCHOOLS

Each school will be asked to identify and provide documentation for its targeted students. In middle schools, particular attention must be given to students in the two years preceding high school; in high schools, it is expected that ninth and tenth grade students will receive this attention.

##### Middle Schools

The following criteria will be used to select student participants in all middle school dropout prevention programs. Each AI/DP or DPP middle school is expected to serve at least 150 students. The criteria listed below must be applied in order. This means, for example, that the second criterion may be used only when all students meeting the first criterion have been identified and there are still openings in the program. To aid schools in the selection process, Student Information Services is generating rosters of all eligible students.

Students are eligible to participate in middle school dropout prevention programs if they:

- I. are in Grades 8 and 9 in junior high schools or Grades 7 and 8 in intermediate schools and:
  1. have 30-74 absences in the 1986-87 school year;
  2. have 15 absences or more for spring 1987;
  3. have 25-29 absences and one of the following high risk indicators for the 1986-87 school year:
    - a) reading 1 or more years below grade level;
    - b) 2 or more major subject failures;
    - c) 20 or more latenesses;
    - d) 20 or more 1/2 day absences;
    - e) overage;
    - f) LEP entitled;
  4. participated in the 1986-87 dropout prevention program but are no longer eligible because of improved attendance.
- II. If there are still-openings available, grade 6 or 7 junior high school students should be selected, applying the above criteria in order of presentation.
- III. If there are still openings available after October 31, 1987, the following students in grades 8 and 9 are also eligible:
  1. were LTAs in the 1986-87 school year but have 10 or more days of attendance between September 8, 1987, and October 31, 1987.
  2. have 10 or more absences between September 8, 1987 and October 31, 1987, but were not LTAs in 1986-87 and are not LTAs or "no-shows" in 1987-88.

All of the above criteria, including the attendance criterion, apply to special education as well as general education students.

NOTE: Schools are expected to include Limited English Proficient Students who meet the eligibility criteria in a full program.

#### High Schools

The following criteria will be used to select student participants in all high school dropout prevention programs. Each high school is expected to serve at least 150 students. Additionally, they must serve a percentage of special education students equivalent to the percentage of special education

students enrolled in the school. A supplemental allocation will be provided for this purpose. To aid schools in the selection process, Student Information Services is generating rosters of eligible students.

A minimum of 100 students must be selected as a dropout prevention "core" in each school. These students must meet one of the following criteria:

1. they have 20 or more absences in the spring of 1987; or
2. they were designated LTAs in the 1986-87 school year but have 10 or more days of attendance in September and October, 1987.

The rest of the population to be served may be selected using criteria 1 and 2 or the following additional criteria. In AI/DP schools, a transitional program is mandated in which 50 students are selected by criteria 1, 2, or 3. The transitional program is described further in Attachment 2. Priority should be given to incoming students who participated in 1986-87 middle school dropout prevention programs. Criteria 4 and 5 may not be used in AI/DP schools without explicit permission from the Office of High School Support Services. Indication of 1986-87 participation will be noted on the List Notice.

3. They participated or were eligible to participate in 1986-87 dropout prevention programs but are no longer eligible because of improved attendance;
4. They are referred by the principal as "at-risk" (for a total of no more than 5% of the target population); or
5. They failed 3 or more major subjects because of excessive cutting (40% or more classes cut).

All of the above criteria, including the attendance criterion, apply to special education as well as general education students. Resource room students are to be served with general education students in dropout prevention programs. Eligible Limited English Proficient students must be included in a full program.

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## APPENDIX D

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### AIDP STATE EDUCATION LAW

#### Education Law Section 3602 Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention Apportionment

23. Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention Apportionment. a. In addition to any other aid payable under the provisions of this section, school districts with an attendance ratio in the nineteen hundred eighty-two—eighty-three school year at or below the tenth percentile statewide for such year shall be eligible for aid not to exceed the current year approved cost of conducting programs to improve student attendance and student retention pursuant to the provisions of this subdivision and in accordance with regulations adopted by the commissioner for such purpose. Such aid shall be computed by multiplying the positive remainder of one minus the district's nineteen hundred eighty-two—eighty-three attendance ratio, by its enrollment by two hundred sixteen dollars and sixty-five cents. For the purposes of this subdivision, the attendance ratio of the city school district of the city of New York shall be computed on a city-wide basis. Enrollment for the purposes of this subdivision shall mean the enrollment of pupils attending public schools of a district and so enrolled on the first day of October in the base year in grades kindergarten through twelve. For aid payable in the school year nineteen hundred eighty-four—eighty-five through nineteen hundred eighty-seven—eight-eight, this subdivision shall apply to any school district with an attendance ratio equal to or less than nine thousand two hundred eighty-five ten thousandths.

b. Attendance Plan. (1) For the nineteen hundred eighty-five—eighty-six school year and thereafter, school districts receiving aid under this subdivision shall file a plan with the commissioner by July fifteenth detailing a program pursuant to paragraph c of this subdivision to improve attendance and student retention and shall indicate how the district will use aid received under this subdivision for such purposes. Such plan shall (i) provide for the targeting of monies to school buildings with chronic truancy rates equal to or higher than the district median; (ii) detail how programs funded under this subdivision will be coordinated with the dropout prevention programs of local public and private community agencies and organizations; (iii) detail procedures for reviewing the attendance and academic records of all pupils in the district during the two year period prior to entrance into high school for the purpose of identifying pupils with a high risk of truancy and academic failure, including but not limited to victims of child abuse or neglect, or pupils who are in foster care; and (iv) provide for services to such students; (v) provide for services to pregnant pupils, and parenting pupils and for coordination of such services with those services provided to such pupils by local social services districts; (vi) provide for services to pupils who are members of households receiving public assistance, and who reside in hotels, motels, shelters or other temporary living arrangements and for coordination of such services with those services provided by local social service districts; (vii) provide for the coordination

of services under this subdivision with those provided under paragraph e of subdivision one of this section. (viii) provide for the coordination of services under this section with those required under section two hundred forty-three-a of the executive law; and (ix) provide for parental involvement. Such plan shall specify measurable performance objectives for the improvement of pupil performance, attendance and student retention.

(2) A city school district in a city having a population of more than one million shall file a plan pursuant to this subdivision containing only such programs as are selected by the chancellor with the approval of the commissioner from replicable model attendance improvement/dropout prevention programs which have demonstrated effectiveness. Upon approval of the plan, the commissioner shall be authorized to make payments for such purposes pursuant to section thirty-six hundred nine of this chapter. Such districts shall also file an interim report with the commissioner by January fifteenth of the current year in a form prescribed by the commissioner.

c. Allowable costs. For the purposes of this subdivision, programs and services which may be approved by the commissioner pursuant to this subdivision shall include but not be limited to: the services of additional support personnel including attendance, counseling and social work personnel; the institution of new or additional programs for in-school suspension programs work-experience, diagnostic screening, computerized telephone contact systems, alternative education programs and other services designed to improve student attendance and retention rates. Such services may be provided by contract with non-school based organizations. A school district may contract with a board of cooperative educational services for the provision of such services. All services shall be coordinated to the maximum extent feasible with services available pursuant to other state, local and federally funded programs. In no case shall the cost of similar services provided by the district in the nineteen hundred eighty-three-eighty-four school year be considered allowable costs for the purposes of this subdivision.

d. The commissioner is authorized to provide technical assistance to eligible school districts in developing a resource allocation plan in connection with programs funded according to this subdivision.

e. By March first of the current year, the commissioner shall cause to be prepared a report on the improvement in attendance and student retention in districts receiving aid under this subdivision, and shall submit such report along with appropriate recommendations to the legislature.

f. For aid payable in school year nineteen hundred eighty-five-eighty-six and thereafter a school district which spends less than its local funds as defined by regulations of the commissioner in the base year during the current year on similar programs shall have its apportionment under this subdivision reduced in an amount equal to such deficiency in the current or the succeeding school year.

g. The commissioner shall adopt regulations to implement the provisions of this subdivision.

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**APPENDIX E**

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**NEW YORK CITY AIDP AND DPP HIGH SCHOOLS - 1986/87**

New York City Board of Education  
High Schools Selected to Participate in the  
Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention (AIDP)  
or Dropout Prevention Program (DPP)

| <b><u>HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT</u></b>         | <b><u>AIDP HIGH SCHOOL</u></b>                                                                                                         | <b><u>DPP HIGH SCHOOL</u></b>                        |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>BRONX</b>                               | Evander Childs<br>James Monore<br>Morris<br>John F. Kennedy<br>DeWitt Clinton<br>Adlai E. Stevenson<br>Christopher Columbus<br>Walton  | Theodore Roosevelt<br>South Bronx<br>William H. Taft |
| <b>BROOKLYN</b>                            | Erasmus Hall<br>George Wingate                                                                                                         | Bushwick<br>Thomas Jefferson<br>Prospect Heights     |
| <b>BASIS</b><br>(Brooklyn & Staten Island) | Lafayette<br>Boys & Girls<br>Sarah J. Hale<br>Curtis                                                                                   | John Jay<br>Eastern District                         |
| <b>MANHATTAN</b>                           | Julia Richman<br>Martin Luther King, Jr.<br>George Washington<br>Park West<br>Washington Irving<br>Seward Park<br>Lower East Side Prep | Louis D. Brandeis                                    |
| <b>QUEENS</b>                              | Andrew Jackson<br>William C. Bryant<br>Franklin K. Lane                                                                                | Far Rockaway                                         |
| <b>ALTERNATIVE</b>                         | Bronx Regional                                                                                                                         |                                                      |
| <b>VOCATIONAL</b>                          | Automotive                                                                                                                             |                                                      |

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## APPENDIX F

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### NEW YORK CITY AIDP AND DPP MIDDLE SCHOOLS - 1986/87

New York City Board of Education  
Middle Schools Selected to Participate in the  
Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention Program (AIDP) and  
Dropout Prevention Programs (DPP)

#### COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

#### MIDDLE SCHOOLS

|    |                                                |
|----|------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | J-22, J-60                                     |
| 2  | I-70                                           |
| 3  | I-44, J-54, J-88, J-118                        |
| 4  | J-13, J-45, J-99, J-117                        |
| 5  | I-10, J-43                                     |
| 6  | I-52, I-143, I-164                             |
| 7  | I-139, I-151, I-162, I-183                     |
| 8  | I-52, I-74, J-123, J-125, I-131, I-174, I-192  |
| 9  | J-22, I-82, I-117, I-145, I-147, I-148, I-166, |
| 10 | J-45, J-80, I-115, J-118, I-137, J-141, J-143  |
| 11 | J-113, J-127, J-135,                           |
| 12 | J-98, I-116, I-167, I-193                      |
| 13 | J-113, J-258, J-265, J-117                     |
| 14 | I-33, J-49, J-50, J-126, I-318                 |
| 15 | J-51, I-88, J-136, J-142, I-293                |
| 16 | J-35, J-57, I-324                              |
| 17 | J-61, I-246, I-320, I-390, I-391               |
| 19 | J-166, J-171, J-218, J-292, J-302              |
| 20 | J-62                                           |
| 21 | J-228, J-281                                   |
| 23 | I-55, I-263, I-271, I-275                      |
| 24 | J-93                                           |
| 27 | J-53, J-198, J-202, J-210                      |
| 28 | J-8, J-72                                      |
| 29 | I-238                                          |
| 30 | J-10, I-126, J-141                             |
| 31 | I-27, I-49                                     |
| 32 | I-111, J-162, I-291, J-296                     |

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